THOUGHTS ON UNITY

NEVILLE S. TALBOT

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Thoughts on Unity

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Preface

I OFFER these thoughts on unity to my fellow-Christians in the hope that they may be as a little tributary to a swelling stream. Deep currents of thought and desire are moving the hearts of separated Christians towards unity. May they converge in one great flood to 'make glad the City of God'!

I partly justify this addition to the literature on Reunion on the ground that an intimacy with the Student Christian Movement since 1907 has enabled me, in a measure, to fulfil the desires of the Anglican Bishops, which they expressed in the Report of the Lambeth Conference, 1908. They laid primary stress (see footnote on p. 81) on the need for conference between Christians of different traditions. Whatever is true in this little book is largely the fruit of conference with my contemporary Free Churchmen, to whom I now feel bound both by affection and by a shared longing for visible unity.

But I have further reasons for writing. I want not only to estimate the lessons of contact and friendship with others, but to get my estimate corrected. I want to learn. If I have written provocatively, it is because I desire to provoke instruction for myself. There is bound

to be much deficiency in my judgment of what the Spirit is saying to the Churches. I ask others to supply the deficiency. I ask them, too, to forgive anything I have written which, while it provokes, also alienates.

I should like to mention other instances (known to me) of contemporary thought which seem to be travelling in the same direction as my own, namely:—'Pathways to Christian Unity: A Free Church View' (Macmillan); 'The Catholic Party and the Nonconformists,' by H. L. Goudge (Mowbray); 'Look for the Morning,' a Charge by the Bishop of Bombay, 1919 (Oxford: Baxter's Press); 'The Church and Religious Unity,' by H. H. Kelly (Longmans).

N. S. T.

OXFORD, *January* 1920.

Publisher's Note

THE Student Christian Movement is an interdenominational body, and different views on the Church are therefore represented in its membership. This book is not issued as a statement of the views of the Movement on the subject of 'Christian Unity.' It is offered as expressing one point of view worthy of attention at the present time. It is hoped to publish others on the same subject.

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FOR as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.

I. The Urgent Need of Unity

THERE is little need to advertise the subject of this essay. The reunion of the Christian Church is a living issue, whither a great many currents of thought and desire are converging. If the war has done one thing it has driven home on the common consciousness the sense that the world is one thing. It has furnished one dramatic illustration after another that races, however far removed geographically and in development, are fellow-members in one destiny. It would be difficult to find any large section of the human family whose daily life has not been profoundly modified by the dislocations of the war. The spark at Serajevo set the whole world ablaze. The roll of honour numbers representatives of nearly every race under the sun.

All the language therefore of the single front is applicable to much more than military strategy. For commerce, for education, for science—for every human interest—'the field is the world.' If this is so in things secular, it is so in things spiritual. Men of all nations are coming consciously to share in a community of spiritual need and aspiration. The world-situation is calling for a world-religion. It is only natural therefore, the world being

what it is, that a stronger impulse towards Christian unity comes from the foreign mission-field than from anywhere else. For it is there that the local, provincial and national idiosyncrasies of fissured Western Christianity are thrown into the most glaring relief.

At the same time it is most necessary to remember that the unity of the world which is the result of modern means of communication is notably superficial. It is geographical and economic. It tends to produce an external sameness in town-life everywhere. But beneath the surface and alongside the mechanical inventions of civilisation, racial differences in mind and spirit remain distinct. East and West may travel in trains, ride on bicycles and use telephones, but it costs more than mechanical inventions to reconcile their souls. Indeed the reduction of the whole world to a neighbourhood has but intensified friction between its contiguous parts. The war has not revealed a new problem of unity: it was itself, in a great measure, the outcome of the smallness and therefore of the discord of the world. Civilisation, while it has aggravated racialism, has proved singularly powerless to unify races.[1] It lacks the secret of reconciliation between the diverse elements in the human

[1] Except perhaps in America; and there the reconciliation is between whites and not between black and white.

family. It is looking for a spirit of fellowship which shall match the changed conditions of the world. For the changed conditions of themselves do but emphasise the more the need of an increase in fellowship. Only a new spirit of fellowship, it is widely recognised, can maintain the peace of the world and can save the world from self-destruction. Hence there is a turning of eyes towards those who bear the Christian name. The question rises far and near: Is there in Christ the secret of world-reconciliation? Therefore a fiercer light than ever beats on the divisions among those who profess the Name, which once was declared to be the one Name given among men whereby all might find a common salvation. How can a divided Church come to the help of a divided world? Will the Church fail the world in its need? Is it impossible for her to know in her hour of visitation the things which belong unto peace?

Certain world-wide conditions, then, thrust the task of Christian unity into special prominence. But, it must be observed, they do not therefore mitigate the difficulty of the task. It seems often to be thought that because the problem of Christian unity is urgent, therefore it is easy. That is a grave delusion, which will be fruitful in bitter disappointment.

Secular experience, as has been suggested, shows how hard it is to unify the diversity of

mankind in any radical fashion. The secret of unity among men is not to be found in the resources of worldly wisdom. The world needs a peace which it itself cannot give. If the secret of reconciliation lies in Christ, it will never be laid hold of by those who think that it is merely a matter of easy-going toleration or so much human geniality. A unity which is arrived at along roads of least resistance, or is the coalescence of dissolving loyalties, will be of on avail either to the Church or to the world. History has shown repeatedly that religion itself divides as much as it unites men. Again and again religion has but intensified national, tribal, class antagonisms. The world therefore needs a peace which not only itself but religion as such cannot give. Religious sentiment by itself will never unite men. Heathenism proves that a jungle of different cults, matching the diversities in human society, grows in the soil of tolerance. On the other hand, the history of Christianity shows that Christian intolerance, born of the sense that Christianity is not a shapeless and accommodating heathenism but a definite object of loyalty and conviction, has been conducive to division and fruitful in discord. Men have quarrelled because they believed in something worth fighting about. It does not therefore seem likely that where geniality fails bigotry will succeed.

So in whatever way it is viewed the problem

of unity is one of almost desperate difficulty. There can be no good in shirking this fact. It is too little taken into account by much current discussion. If the matter—so it is suggested—were referred to a few broad-minded laymen they would make short work of it. This matches and is still more absurd than the notion that a panacea for all the problems of government is to be found in the wisdom of hard-headed men of business.

But difficulties, even if desperate, exist to be faced and overcome. They are no excuse for shirking. What on the human side can countervail against them is a passion of longing and desire. But that will not be enough. Religion can furnish no secret of unity if it does not go beyond human resources of sympathy and love. A spirit of brotherliness will no doubt go a long way, but it will not go all the way. For few things are more self-defeating than some men's best-intentioned brotherliness. The whole question is whether there be in Christ as the revelation of the one God a bond and secret of unity indiscoverable elsewhere. Can Christianity, because its truth is given by God to men and is not made by man, be the religion which can do for the world that which religion in general cannot do? Can it unite men in a faith, not in themselves or in others, but in God?

The question of unity is therefore, I would

insist, primarily a question of truth. It is linked with intimate closeness to the Gospel as the revealed truth of God.

I want to ask therefore whether Christian men can retain a hold on the Gospel in separation. Do they need unity for central and cardinal reasons? Up till recently a great deal of most fervent Christian conviction has gone to make division. Central loyalties have led men to separate. Is this so now and will it be so in the future? Is unity bound up with the things about which men most care, in the sense that they cannot effectively care about them in separation? Is unity vital to their knowledge of Christ as the revelation of God? Is it central to their interpretation of the New Testament? Is it inseparable from their hopes of Christ's cause? Is it for them as believers in and witnesses to Christ a *sine qua non*? Or is the truth of Christianity secure apart from unity? Is unity therefore only a matter of a great expediency? Is it only a most desirable corollary to the assurance of faith which men enjoy in separation?

I have little hope of unity unless it be the first set of questions which receive an affirmative answer. If unity is vital to Christian truth then the task of unity, however difficult, will under God be overcome. My heart therefore goes out to the ancient prayers, in which a primary emphasis falls on truth as integral

to unity: 'We pray for the good estate of the Catholic Church; that it may be so guided and governed by Thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.' And we pray God 'to inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity and concord,' and to 'grant that all they that do confess Thy holy Name may agree in the truth of Thy holy Word, and live in unity, and godly love.'

There is the true proportion of the whole matter.

II. Unity and the Gospel of the Kingdom of God

I TURN then first to the relationship between unity and the interpretation of the New Testament. I want to show that unity is intimately connected with those main truths about which faith is enthusiastic. The New Testament is a mine long productive of great wealth, but worked on a plan which seemed to promise no fresh discoveries of gold. Now men quarry it afresh in a different way, and they have the sense of making new discoveries of wealth. They are 'glad of Thy Word as one that findeth great spoils.' The word, the finding of which yields something of the joy of discovery, is the Word of the Kingdom. Something—was it the doctrinal lenses in their spectacles?—was it an exaggerated interest in individual salvation?—was it ecclesiastical prejudice?—in the past has led men to pass over this primary element in the message of Jesus. As Mr. Clutton-Brock has lately pointed out, there is a glaring contrast between the wellnigh total absence of reference to the Kingdom of God in the Book of Common Prayer (as a document representative of traditional

Christianity) and the main position which the Kingdom held in the mind of our Lord. A certain displacement in direction seems to have occurred in the Christian tradition. Our Lord's whole self was pre-eminently directed towards one end. He was seeking one thing first, it was 'the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.' He had one aim of which the best interpretation is found in the words of His prayer. It was that the Father's Name should be hallowed, His Kingdom come, His will be done, as in heaven so on earth. I think it is fair to say that traditional Christianity has to some extent lost this direction. The Church has been engaged in maintaining itself, or with getting individuals to heaven, or with the provision to men of religious comfort. The emphasis in its thought of God has been different from that in the mind of Jesus. It has been less singly concentrated than He on one thing—God, His work and purposes here and hereafter. It has rather thought of Him as waiting for His children when they leave this world. Thus it has thought differently about the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom has been rather a future hope than a present reality. Or the Church has claimed—as I remember it was passionately claimed by a vicar at a clerical discussion during my first year after ordination—to be itself the Kingdom. I have little doubt that the vicar was wrong. The Church is for

the Kingdom.[1] It is in the world as the organ in the hands of God for bringing in the Kingdom. It exists for the realisation of the Lord's Prayer. I remember a leader in the generation previous to my own saying to me: 'We never used to

[1] Cf. Hort, *The Christian Ecclesia*, p. 19: 'Since Augustine's time the Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God, of which we read so often in the Gospels, has been simply identified with the Christian Ecclesia. This is not an unnatural deduction from some of our Lord's sayings on the subject taken by themselves; but it cannot, I think, hold its ground when the whole range of His teaching about it is comprehensively examined. We may speak of the Ecclesia as the visible representative of the Kingdom of God, or as the primary instrument of its sway or under other analogous forms of language. But we are not justified in identifying the one with the other, so as to be able to apply directly to the Ecclesia whatever is said in the Gospels about the Kingdom of God.'

Compare with this Cairns, *Christianity in the Modern World*, pp. 211–12. Alluding to the mistaken assumption of the identity of the Church and the Kingdom, he says: 'Doubtless the two categories are to a considerable extent coincident, the circles are concentric and have a wide common area, but I believe they are distinct, and that the Kingdom is much the wider of the two. The Church is the visible community of professing Christians founded by our Lord for the propaganda of the Kingdom, and by virtue of its visibility it is subject to limitations from which the Kingdom is free. As a visible organization it has its Sacraments and its Polity, and must take the risks of history in order that it may accomplish its work in the world of space and time. It is the League of the Kingdom of God, and, like the Family and the State, the two other great forms of historical association, rests upon and exists for that supreme end.'

use the Lord's Prayer in that sense.' That is what I meant by the old mine being quarried on a different plan. True it may be replied that the Church could not be the means towards the Kingdom if it were not itself the embodiment of that which it seeks to establish. It could not be the organ if it were not also the organism of the Kingdom. But that leaves unaffected the fact that the Church is here not for its own but for the world's salvation. Historical (as distinct from doctrinal) study of the New Testament has brought the Kingdom of God back to the centre. It has corrected a departure from the mind of Christ—from His proportion of faith. When this departure is traced back it is found, I think, to have its source in the misunderstanding by the disciples of our Lord's teaching about the Kingdom to come hereafter. The early Church clearly was able to survive the disappointment of its expectation of the immediate Parousia and end of the world. It was led to conceive of its Lord as not only about to return in final catastrophe, but also as at work in His Church to complete His work of glorifying the Name of the Father on earth as in heaven. The two conceptions are not antithetical but complementary. The Lord who is to come in judgment is the Lord who has already come in the Spirit. He has come in the Spirit to prepare His people for His coming in judgment. Nevertheless men's minds were

perplexed by the tarrying of the Lord. Probably the preservation and valuation of the Gospels were due in part to the help which they afforded to this perplexity. When the eschatological promises of the first Christian preachers of the Gospel came to nothing, the Church may well have rallied to the teaching of Christ about the Kingdom of God which is contained in the Synoptic Gospels. Yet the Epistles, some of which are representative of the period at which the hope of the immediate second coming of the Lord was predominant, were also preserved in the New Testament. They helped to establish after-generations of Christians who read the New Testament without regard to its historical development, in a view which looked for the Kingdom to come not in this but in another world. Hence in a measure has sprung a disproportionate estimate of the Church and of the world. The Church has been tempted to look upon itself as an ark of salvation in and from the world of which it despaired, and to maintain itself as a refuge against the day of 'Kingdom come.' The same disproportion of faith and misplacement of emphasis are to be noticed in the tradition of personal as contrasted with that of ecclesiastical religion. The intenser forms of individual and evangelical religion have been deeply coloured by a regard for ultimate safety. The end for the individual has fre-

quently come to be thought of as the salvation of his own soul. To be 'saved' has been to have an assurance as to one's destiny hereafter.

These statements will certainly evoke disclaimers and charges of exaggeration. The problem is certainly one of discrimination. Perhaps I have the mind of an ex-padre who has been harassed for four and a half years not by what Christianity is but by what the general public think it is. Probably the common idea of Christianity, as an almost exclusive concern about rewards and punishments in the next world, has been diffused by that element in Christian tradition which is both most familiar and most misleading to the average man, namely hymns. At any rate it would be undiscriminating reaction to suggest that the Church should not be concerned with the salvation of souls. It can never help the world except by being what the world is not. It can never spread the Kingdom of God except so far as that Kingdom —that reign of God—is within the hearts of its members. Only, its distinctive work of 'saving' men, that is of putting them into a recovered possession of their inheritance as children of God and members one of another, must not stop there. This inner possession must be turned outwards in service to the world. Saved men must be saving. Those who have received much must give much.

So, too, it would show a lack of discrimina-

tion to swing away from concern with the world to come and to confine things Christian within the horizons of this world. That would be to take up a position radically at variance with the consistently other-worldly mind of Christ. It would be to cut this world loose from the source whence is derived its supreme importance. Future and present hopes of the coming of the Kingdom are complementary. For human existence here is redeemed from transiency and is given abiding value by the vision of its continuity with a life beyond. Its mortality is irradiated by the light of eternity. Its tangled and mixed compromises are incurably disappointing except as set against a background of future attainment. The sanction for the coming of the Kingdom on earth is that it has come in heaven and therefore will come on earth. In nothing is the wholeness of our Lord's outlook more wonderful than in the perspective wherein He viewed earth and heaven, this world and the next.

I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that the Church has seen things out of His perspective. In losing sight, in some measure at any rate, of the Kingdom of God here and hereafter as the end for which it exists it has laid itself open to the charge of substituting self-regard for self-forgetfulness. Christ could be no saviour of the world if His salvation meant primarily a concern about

self and safety. He said quite plainly that salvation is vital but that, like happiness, it eludes direct search. With finality He defined the law of life that he who would save life must lose it for His sake and the Gospel's. By that He meant that to find the secret of existence men must share in His self-forgetful devotion to the cause, the purpose, the Kingdom of God. Else the effort to find and hoard salvation will end in loss. The loss to Christianity derived from a pursuit of a salvation has been the severance of religion from life. Service for the Kingdom on earth, upon which salvation attends as health upon exercise, has been neglected in a struggle to secure places in the Kingdom in heaven. Hence Christianity has come to be thought of as remote from the work of the world. Its appeal has touched men on a lower level than the highest in them. There could be no finality in our Lord's definition if men were not made with a capacity for adventurous self-giving. They are therefore made to be unimpressed by appeals to self-saving. The selfishness that is in them is proof against the attack of a higher kind of self-regard. Salvation must be from self.

If what I have said is true, it is vitally related to the question of Christian unity. Christ's Word of the Kingdom, as it sounds forth again, is as a trumpet call in the ears of younger men and women. It arrays them in

a common cause. If there is passion in their response, it involves a passion to be one in Christ for the sake of His cause. There has been little passion for unity while Christianity has been self-centred and forgetful of the warfare for God's Kingdom in the world. The different Christian 'ways' (or denominations) have had no difficulty in being mutually independent. It has been the glory of each body to believe that its way is *the* way of salvation. They have lacked an end beyond themselves to elicit their united devotion. But now all this is passing. It was passing before the war. It began to pass last century, as soon as ever the disappointment of their hopes in modern civilisation turned the thoughts of men again towards Christ and His social message. It was passing as the result of the reflex influence of foreign missionary enterprise. The war has hastened the process. War is a temporary sacrament of an endless conflict. In itself it broke in upon the social and political dissensions of men with a summons to them to close their ranks and march towards one goal. In our country it made—with difficulty—for unity. For the Allies the war was one long painful lesson in unity. But it has also had results beyond itself. It has revealed again the moral character of history. It has made plain that this world's politics are the sphere where moral and spiritual issues are raised and God's eternal judgments are at

work. And in so doing it has exposed a great separation between men's minds and the reality of the living God. In flabbergasting fashion it has summoned them to reconcile their hazy faith in Him with this life's terrific potentialities.

To-day, therefore, a common task confronts the divided Church. It is to preach again in living word and sacrificial deed the good news of the Kingdom of God. It is the bringing to bear upon the life of the world 'the powers of the world to come.' This does not mean the equating of the Gospel with social ideals or political programmes. But it does mean the discharge into the body of secular life of the dynamic vision which has its centre and source in the heavenly places. It means the leavening and transfiguring of this world by the faith that God cares about it to all eternity. It means the Kingdom of God here, that is, the making of the life of men here in its entirety to correspond with the reality of God and of man—with His Fatherhood and their sonship and brotherhood. It means that the City of God which shall be in perfection in heaven is in building amid the imperfect conditions of earth.

III. Unity and the Mind of Christ

WE have seen in the last chapter an illustration of the interaction of present experience with men's interpretation of the past. They have brought from their study of the New Testament a recovered Gospel of the Kingdom wherewith to interpret the needs of the world to-day: they have been urged by those needs to make the recovery. Alike in understanding the past and in envisaging the present, they find unity among Christ's fellow-combatants centrally intermingled with their main hopes and aspirations. With this in mind I would now turn again to the New Testament to seek for light on the Church whose unity is so much to be desired. If the historical study of the New Testament is making central to the Church what was central to our Lord, namely the Kingdom, what light does it throw on His mind about the Church?

For those who would find the features of their particular ecclesiastical tradition mirrored in His mind, the light seems at first sight uncomfortable. For it declares the necessity of modifying the idea that our Lord when on earth

founded a totally new Church, or legislated finally and precisely as to its ordering. I think that until recently it was held — perhaps especially by Catholic minds—that our Lord, when on earth and when recognised to be speaking with the authority of the incarnate Son of God, handed over to the Apostles a new and completely organised Church. But it has been a turning-point in the study of the New Testament to recognise that a faith in the Incarnation was not in the minds of the followers of Jesus while He was with them during His ministry. They got no further then than a faith in Jesus as Messiah. The story of the gospels describes stages in belief anterior to full Christian conviction. As Messiah—as the Christ—our Lord had to do a work the significance of which was not understood at the time, but only subsequently. The good news about God made known in Christ—that is, the rudiments of the doctrine of the Incarnation—was the outcome of the whole experience of the disciples. That experience began when first they followed Jesus, but it only issued for them in a gospel of God after the Resurrection, Ascension and Coming of the Spirit. The gospels do not record that the Gospel was accepted whole and entire from the beginning. They record how the disciples were brought step by step to conviction. During the ministry Jesus had a work to do which was preliminary

to everything else. It was the fulfilment of His vocation for the Kingdom. It was His Messianic, His kingly work to hallow the Father's name, to bring in His Kingdom and to do His will. That work was incomplete at the Cross. Indeed it appeared to be obliterated by the Cross. For Calvary was the tragic crisis at which the question prior to the question Who is Christ ?—namely the question Who is the Father ?—was in suspense. It was the hour at which the reality of the Father's Name was finally challenged and at issue. No one therefore in the days before the Cross was able to receive the implications of the truth which was disclosed only through that which followed after the Cross. It was only under the guidance of the Spirit that the disciples understood what before had been hid from them. They understood the beginning in the light of the end.

It follows from this that, even if our Lord had legislated with fullness and precision about a new Church, the disciples could not have received his instructions. It would have been meat for babes. But he did not legislate in advance for a new Church, for He counted upon the existence of an old Church—the Israel of God. His whole mission was worked out within the frontiers of the Jewish Church. His mission was to the Jewish Church and nation, which were one thing. He came to call the people of God to the fulfilment of their vocation. His

own vocation was theirs. He wanted them to share in His; but they would not. He found the Jewish Church mainly apostate. He suffered rejection at its hands. And yet He never contemplated its coming to an end. It was rather the vineyard which would be given to other husbandmen. The calling of God's people was not abrogated though they had forgotten it. Whether men would hear or whether they would forbear, He set Himself to secure its consummation and continuance.

Once this is understood about the old Israel, then confusion is avoided about the new. Jesus as the Messiah came not to destroy the old but to fulfil it. In fulfilling it He remade it. It was renewed in the achievement of its destiny. So He entrusted to new husbandmen the vineyard of which the former were unworthy. He committed to the Apostles the new covenant which was the fulfilment and therefore the supersession of the old. We may be sure of our Lord's mind in this creation of a Messianic ministry. When He was faced with rejection by the old Israel, He deliberately withdrew in order to prepare the nucleus of the new Israel which should inherit the fulfilment of the promises made to the old. When He had evoked the acknowledgment of His Messiahship, then He could build His Church.[1] That was a tremendous

[1] Matt. xvi. 16.

acknowledgment. It was nothing less than the recognition that God's purposes for the world through Israel were in fulfilment. From that day forward Jesus had with Him the foundation of the new Israel which would survive the passing of the old. He had with Him the representatives of the new twelve tribes to whom He could commit the new covenant sealed in His own blood. He had with Him those whom He could make trustees of the new rite commemorative of His self-offering upon the Cross.

Such was the beginning of the Christian Church as the new Israel. It was deeply embedded within the limits of the old Israel. There is no sign whatever that the disciples saw beyond those limits while our Lord was still with them. He Himself was shut up within narrow limitations for the accomplishment of his Messianic vocation. The tension of this limitation is evident throughout the ministry. It was part of His straitening. He could greet the faith of the Roman centurion and could raise His eyes for a moment to the prospect of a future coming-in from the east and west and north and south. But His immediate mission was to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. With startling harshness He appears as unwilling to take the children's bread and give it to strangers. Only through death could those limitations be broken through. It behoved the Messiah to suffer and thus to enter into His glory. This expansion

through death was as of a grain of wheat which except it 'fall into the earth and die, abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit.' Nor were those limitations broken through at once for His followers. Our Lord did not Himself hand over to them either a catholic society or a catholic gospel whether before or after the Resurrection. They were in no mind to receive them. There were many things He had to say to them before He died, but they could not bear them then.[1] After the Resurrection they were thinking still of the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel.[2] But He had done enough. He left them in possession of that which was capable of expansion from within the narrow boundaries at Jerusalem to the uttermost borders of the earth. He passed on to them His own mission to the House of Israel. As the Father had sent Him even so He sent them. He left the steps of further expansion to follow upon the new-creative arrival of the Holy Spirit, Who would take of His and show it unto them.

In strict harmony with this we get the faithful picture of the fellowship of the Apostles during the first days at Jerusalem. The witness of those who had been with Jesus was to their fellow-Israelites. They had His Messianic standard in their hands. They were witnesses to

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[1] John xvi. 12. [2] Acts i. 6

the Messiah, Whom the rulers had slain, but Whom God had raised up. They were in possession of the good news of the remission of sins given by God to His people through the suffering of His Messiah. It is so possessed that we find them within the ancient Jewish order; 'day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved.'[1]

Then followed the expansion by stages which we need not stay to trace. The Messianic gospel for Jews became the Catholic gospel for all. The glorious consummation of the immemorial past was attained. In Abraham's seed all the families of the earth were blessed. The wonder of this irradiates the New Testament—the wonder of the inclusion of the Gentiles within the Israel of God. It was 'the mystery of Christ (Messiah); which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men but now was revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-members of the body and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ through the gospel.' The new branches were grafted on to the old root. Those who had been 'strangers and

[1] Acts ii. 46–47.

sojourners' became 'fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner-stone.'

This interpretation of the beginning of the Church[1] is free, I think, from the precarious straining of evidence which is common in Church histories. It lays bare a general principle with which the details of evidence harmoniously accord. It is the principle of God's dealings with mankind through a people of His choice. But it is only candid to recognise that it involves a loss in definiteness and certainty as to any complete and detailed ordering of the Christian society by our Lord. Things which some have ascribed to His final legislation when on earth were given by Him to His Church through the operation of His Spirit. But it throws into prominence the nature of the Church, not as constructed *de novo* by our Lord but as the God-sent organ of the divine will. We gain a firm hold upon His conception of the Church as—to use St. Peter's words in their characteristically Jewish idiom—an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.[2] The thing about which men

[1] For a fuller exposition of this line of interpretation, see Hamilton's *The People of God*, vol. ii.

[2] 1 Peter ii. 9.

to-day most need to agree is the nature of the Church of God as such. They need a main conception of the Church as the gift of God before they come to discuss the right means of its expression and continuity. We get that conception, not from our Lord as innovator, but from Him as ratifying the purpose of God all down the ages. We get the assurance that the Church is not made by human association, but is the result of the divine choice and gift and sending since the very beginning. All that is implied of divine initiative in the calling, making and guiding of the old Israel was carried over into the new. Christ and His whole work are inseparable from the people of God among whom He appeared. He had not to make a new Church, but to purify, reanimate, reorganise, recommission an old. He had to consummate the vocation of God's people —the vocation to be, not God's favourites for their own sake, but His servants for the sake of all nations. In so doing He met with rejection as did His followers after him. Therefore His work of salvation became inevitably an act of judgment. The unteachable champions had to be replaced by others. New shepherds had to be found for the flock which was betrayed by the old. Thus our Lord secured the means whereby the work entrusted to Israel should be carried out and completed. He made the Apostles—the men whom He sent—inheritors of the promises made to the fathers and fulfilled in Himself. In so

doing He put His seal to the divine constitution of things whereby the purpose of God for the world was worked out through a people.

As, then, we read the New Testament again with the desire to receive light on the Church, whose unity we have inherited in fragments, we grip the idea of the Church as always there. It was there before Christ came: it was there as the basis and context of His work; it was there to inherit His salvation; it was there to be refashioned and empowered by His Spirit. It was never put together by men, nor made by their coming together. It was and is, from first to last, the gift of God, the family of His making, the people of His choice.

It is so primary an element in the whole of the New Testament that reference to it is always incidental. No one sets out to prove its claims or justify its functions. It is for this very reason that it has been easy for men to conceive of it as some secondary element in Christianity. Unless it be remembered that some of the most important things in the New Testament are those to which only bare allusion is made, the Church will seem to be an accretion or adjunct to a purer and more original gospel. Underlying and accompanying every stage in the whole development of which the Bible is the record is one distinct visible society—the people of God.

Three things therefore appear to me to emerge

from this discussion. First, the continuity of the Church as the new Israel with the old Israel of God; secondly, the Apostles as the link between old and new, and as the nucleus and foundation-element in the new; thirdly, the reliance by our Lord upon the operation of the Spirit for all further developments.

IV. Unity and the Holy Spirit

IT will be well, before passing to the consideration of the Church in its present broken condition, to lay further emphasis on the importance, from the first, of the work of the Holy Spirit.

The whole work of our Lord was but preparatory to the outpouring of the Spirit from on high. It was only after He had been parted from them that He was able to lead them, and they were able to be led, into the progressive understanding of all that had been fulfilled among them. It was only by the guidance of the Holy Spirit that they were led into the way of truth. A mystery beyond explanation lies in the relationship of the Holy Spirit to our Lord. But it is evident that the coming of the Holy Spirit meant that our Lord stepped beyond the limitations which surrounded Him on earth and was found to be the fountain-head of life and power. The coming of the Spirit was the coming of Jesus to be for ever present with His people. He did not leave them orphaned. He came to them.[1] There never was any gospel preached by His followers until, by the coming of the Spirit, the Christ Who had died and was risen

[1] John xiv. 18.

and exalted to the heavenly places became the unseen Head of the fellowship of His followers in living presence and power. Then the Jewish Messiah was found to be the saviour of mankind. Then the exclusively racial society became the one divine family for all the children of men.

It is impossible to make too much of the dependence of the first Christians upon the reality of the Spirit. Their sole credential with which they faced the world was that the Lord Who had been with them in the flesh was with them in the Spirit. They had nothing by which to prove this except the spiritual vitality of their fellowship. They had nothing by which to prove the truth of the Gospel except the fact that it was not in word only but in power. They had no outside authority to which to appeal. They had no authenticated document, no traditional formula placed in their hands for them to pass on to others. Jesus had given them nothing of the sort. He had only promised Himself to be with them. True they had the Old Testament as the revealed Word of God. To it they turned with eagerness for proof-texts wherewith to convince their fellow-Jews. They had too, as we have seen, the continuity of the new Israel with the old. They were familiar, as with the air that they breathed, with incorporation into the family of God. But they had nothing to carry them beyond the old covenant; they had no proof for their fellow-Jews that the new

covenant had superseded the old, except the life and wisdom and power of the Spirit at work among them. Still more were they thrown in naked dependence on the self-authenticating power of Him in Whose Name they preached, when they passed beyond the sphere where Jewish Church and Scriptures were reverenced and confronted the Gentile world. All that they could say about Jesus, whether to Jew or Gentile, would have been but a memory of the past but for the communicable experience of His love and power in the present. Thus no man could say that Jesus was Lord save by the Spirit. If any man did not share in the Spirit of Christ he was none of His. Christianity could neither have begun nor spread if Jesus, as invisible Head of His Body the Church, had not done for those who had never seen Him that which He had done for those who had been with Him. The truth as it was in Him was inseparable from the reality of a corporate experience.

Now a salient feature in this corporate experience of the truth of the living God was the endowment of the Christian fellowship with a rich diversity of spiritual gifts. To share in Christ was not to give assent to so many propositions, but to be surrendered to a full stream of life and power. The riches of Christ were inexhaustible. Men had knowledge of one Lord through their membership in the one body. They knew the operation of the one Spirit.

But it was not a monotonously uniform experience but a highly diversified one. They were made sure of the reality of the new life in the Spirit by the variety of its manifestations. There was an organic wholeness in the body evident in the complementary working together of its parts. As men brought to the body manifold differences of temperament, capacity and race, they found themselves matched by the inclusive range of its spiritual resources. There was a variety of ministry or functions in the body, and there was a variety of spiritual gifts wherewith to discharge them. And yet through the whole range of ministries and gifts was the working of one and the same Spirit. There was one principle of life running through all the linked manifestations of wisdom or power or service. There was an identity in difference, a unity in diversity.

This is never proved in the New Testament. St. Paul puts together no precarious case for it. As ever in central things he rested his vehement pleading on a common experience. He ardently expatiates on a matter of fact. In so doing the language descriptive of the organic unity of the human body comes inevitably to his mind. The Body of Christ is nothing ideal and invisible: it is a defined and visible organism in manifest operation. It is one body with many members and many functions. There would be no body but for the working together in mutual harmony

and co-operation of all the different parts. Its oneness exists in a diversity of functions. Its common life is found in a differentiated vitality. Thus he writes :

No one is able to say ' Jesus is Lord ' except under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Now there are various kinds of gifts, but there is one and the same Spirit; various forms of official service, and yet one and the same Lord ; diversities in work, and yet one and the same God—He who in each person brings about the whole result. But to each of us a manifestation of the Spirit has been granted for the common good. To one the utterance of wisdom has been granted through the Spirit ; to another the utterance of knowledge in accordance with the will of the same Spirit ; to a third man, by means of the same Spirit, special faith ; to another various gifts of healing, by means of the One Spirit ; to another the exercise of miraculous powers ; to another the gift of prophecy ; to another the varieties of the gifts of tongues ; to another the interpretation of tongues. But these results are all brought about by one and the same Spirit, who bestows His gifts upon each of us in accordance with His own will.

For just as the human body is one and yet has many parts, and all its parts, many as they are, constitute but one body, so it is with the Church of Christ. For, in fact, in one Spirit all of us—whether we are Jews or Gentiles, slaves or free men—were baptized to form one body ; and we were all nourished by that one Spirit.

For the human body does not consist of one part but of many. Were the foot to say, ' Because I am

not a hand I am not a part of the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body. Or were the ear to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the nostrils be? But, as a matter of fact, God has arranged the parts of the body—every one of them—as He has seen fit. If they were all one part, where would the body be? But, as a matter of fact, there are many parts and but one body. . . . It was God who built up the body, and bestowed more abundant honour on the part that felt the need, that there might be no disunion in the body, but that all the members might entertain the same anxious care for one another's welfare. And if one part is suffering, every other part suffers with it; or if one part is receiving special honour, every other part shares in the joy.

As for you, you are the body of Christ, and individually you are members of it. And by God's appointment, there are in the Church—first Apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers. Then come miraculous powers, and then ability to cure diseases or render loving service, or powers of organization, or varieties of the gift of tongues.[1]

There is but one body and but one Spirit, as also when you were called you had one and the same hope held out to you. There is but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all, who rules over all, acts through all, and dwells in all. Yet to each of us individually grace was given, measured out with the munificence of Christ. For this reason Scripture

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 3 ff. (Weymouth's translation).

says: 'He reascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, and gave gifts to men.' . . . And He Himself appointed some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be pastors and teachers, in order fully to equip His people for the work of serving —for the building up of Christ's body—till we all of us arrive at oneness in faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, and at mature manhood and the stature of full grown men in Christ. So we shall no longer be babes, nor shall we resemble mariners tossed on the waves and carried about according to men's cleverness and unscrupulous cunning, making use of every shifting device to mislead. But we shall lovingly hold to the truth, and shall in all respects grow up into union with Him who is our Head, even Christ. Dependent on Him, the whole body—its various parts closely fitting and firmly adhering to one another—grows by the aid of every contributory link, with power proportioned to the need of each individual part, so as to build itself up in a spirit of love.[1]

Such was the Body of Christ in the great spring days of faith. No doubt St. Paul's words represent an ideal which was only imperfectly realised. He was indeed directing the stream of his passionate pleading at the spirit of strife and division which was even then at work in the Church. But in proportion as the Church realised the ideal, it overcame the world.

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[1] Eph. iv. 4 ff. (Weymouth's translation).

V. The Broken Body of Christ

SUCH *was* the Body of Christ. So we see. But what *is* the Body now? In the village in which I have written some of these words there are 400 inhabitants. But the village has a Parish Church, a large Congregationalist Chapel, a large Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, and a Wesleyan Chapel. All are in rivalry and out of co-operation.

They are representative of the broken Body of Christ. Where once was a vital unity, now is a half-life of separation. Where once was an ardour of contributory service, now is at best a polite diplomacy. Where once was common power, now is dissipated weakness. Where once Christ filled the whole firmament with His familiar and compelling presence, now He is wellnigh a stranger. Where once the Holy Spirit was the mainspring of life, He is now almost unknown. 'I can never understand,' said a leading British general and a stalwart Churchman, 'what you fellows mean by "in Christ."'

What has intervened? How has the Body of Christ come to be so broken? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has He shut up His lovingkindness in displeasure?

These are big questions which I do not

pretend to answer fully. I only fasten on what seems to me to be a vital factor in the breaking of Christian unity. It is the separation of the truth of the Gospel from the fellowship of the one Body of Christ.

In the first days men depended for their knowledge of Christ upon the working of the Spirit in the Christian fellowship. They did not adhere to an institution significant of some unknown mystery. They did not attend at so many traditional but wearisome functions. They found the way, the truth and the life in the one fellowship of Christ's Spirit. They came to first-hand conviction as to the truth delivered to the saints under the vital and compelling influence of the life of the Church. They shared in a corporate experience in which the Gospel which was preached to them was verified and vindicated. I do not mean to say that what was true then has been extinct since, or is non-existent to-day. There would be no surviving Christianity were it not still persistent. But I do mean that where was full-tide, now are or have been ebb-waters. Men can profess Christianity with but a faint knowledge of spiritual fellowship. The truth of the Gospel, if it has not been severed, has become detached from a vital corporate experience.

For since the early days there has followed a long process whereby the truth which was once incarnate in the mind and life and service of

the Christian community has acquired an external fixity and solidity. What I mean is most plainly seen in regard to Scripture, but it also applies to the Church's creeds. The whole of Christendom for generations has had its feet upon what has been thought to be a rock of literal truth. For the impressions which once were made on the hearts and minds of men became crystallised as the absolute Word of God. The spoken word of the Gospel —the witness in life to the Word made flesh— became the written word, and the written word was invested with infallibility. The essential truth, which before was inseparable from the living mind and witnessing service of the Church, came to stand by itself and to constitute an external credential and final authority for faith.

No doubt this process is traceable back to the earliest days of the Christian community. It has its roots in the use that was made by the first teachers and by the writers of the New Testament of the word of the Old Testament as the literal Word of God. But that fact leaves unaffected the truth that the Word of God in Christ—His speaking in a Son—was for long not set down on paper, but was inscribed nowhere but on the witnessing mind of the fellowship of His Spirit.

What has been said about the literal fixation of Scripture applies also in a measure to the credal statements and theological tradition of

the Church. I remember a contemporary of mine, ardent traditionalist, essentially sceptical in his very brilliant mind, comparing the deposit of truth once for all delivered to the saints—to a coin, hard and with milled edges. The Church as a long-established institution has acquired a massed capital of deposited truth. It is true that these deposits would never have been accumulated except as once alive in the interpreting mind of the Church, but when accumulated they appear to stand by themselves with the authority of fixed tradition. But it is most to the point to lay stress here on the external solidity of Scripture as the Word of God, for that has been a determining influence in the whole development of reformed Christianity; and nowhere more so than in the minutely-sundered sects of Anglo-Saxon religion.

When then the breaking, and the repeated breaking, of the unity of the Body of Christ is to be accounted for, I suggest that a very important condition of division was the crystallisation of the truth of Christianity. I do not say that it is the only condition. The motives and reasons which have led to division among Christians are very various. In the nature of the case the Christian revelation, as the revelation of God in the fullness of His personality, is a whole which fervent men have ever and again been quick to see surpasses the partiality of this or that apprehension of it or witness

to it. They have been jealous for those elements in it which have seemed to them to be neglected. Mingled with such jealousy there have been the diversity of human temperament and the differences of race. Politics too, whether imperial as at the break between the East and the West, or national as at the Reformation, have exercised a mighty influence in the direction of division. And in and through all these have been the infirmities, the wilfulness, the sin of mortal men. Self-assertion grows as a weed in religious soil. In the nature of things therefore—it is worth while to enforce the point—unity is hard to attain and maintain. Through the vehement words of St. Paul one detects the strain which was put upon unity precisely by that in which he gloried, namely the sheer strength of differing spiritual gifts and capacities.

But my point is that if unity at all times is difficult, the difficulty has for many generations been increased by the fact that the truth of the Gospel did not appear to men to be imperilled by division. Rather it seemed capable of standing securely by itself. It encouraged men to feel sure that they could stand securely by themselves. No vital sense of the essential need of one fellowship of believers for the maintenance of the faith counteracted the impulse to divide. Different parties fired with a zeal for this or that element in the Christian faith and practice could break

away with *the* Gospel, and cultivate in independence the object of their solicitude. Cardinal truths and main verities seemed to be unendangered by schism. Rather again and again loyalty to the pure rudiments of the Gospel seemed to necessitate division.

This apparent innocuousness of division to the faith can be traced through all the ruptures of the Church, from the break between Rome and Constantinople down to the almost endless splitting of Anglo-Saxon Protestantism. Obviously at the Reformation the main and foundation things in Christianity were never in question. Doctrinally the Reformers' quarrel with the Pope had to do with top-hamper and superstructure, and not with foundations, nor even with the main building. Their passionate concern was to clear the original structure from accretion. In their championship of personal and evangelical faith, in their ardour to rescue it from mediæval abuse, they counted on its being there to be rescued. It was the fulcrum to their lever. It was their standing-ground. They stood with friend and foe alike on the immemoriably-founded main strata of traditional orthodoxy. In particular they rested their whole weight on the unshaken security of Scripture.

So too in our own country when the impossible limitations and penalties of Acts of Uniformity became unendurable, it seemed pure gain to the Puritans, who broke from the Church

of England, to achieve the independence necessary to the practice of a strictly scriptural Christianity. They left, they were seen to leave, without any vivid sense of loss to the Gospel wrought by the breaking of Christian fellowship. So right away through the divisions and re-divisions of Protestantism, the sway of an absolute scripturalism over men's minds prompted them to hive off from each other so as to attain to a Christian way more precisely in accordance with the Word of God than existing ways. I recall meeting a member of a small Bible-Christian sect which had broken, I think from Methodism, because the latter had neglected the scriptural practice of 'breaking bread' on the first day of the week. To such men the truths enshrined in Scripture were quite independent of the unity of the One Body of Christ. Nor in the eyes of those from whom separation was achieved did such separation weaken or affect the faith. Dividing parties have again and again been glad to be rid of one another. They have had no vital need of one another.

The extreme instance in my experience of this supposed disconnection between the Gospel and the mind of the one Church was afforded by an ardent Bible Christian from Cambridge. He was fanatically literalist in his view of the Bible. He was so persuaded that the truth of Christianity was 'in the Book' that, having at

the same time the means to do so, he embarked for India alone and otherwise unaided to convey that truth to Indians. His own fervent personal religion had, as it were, an absolute external authority or credential. He had the mind of the Church in his coat-pocket. He had no need of it in the form of a sustaining and integrating fellowship. He had the truth in his hand. He and it were triumphantly independent of all else.

All this has constituted a notable factor in sectarianism. It is not only the sin of self-will which has produced sects. It has been as responsive to conscience and in jealousy for Christ that men have broken away from their fellow-Christians. The solidly-deposited character of Christian truth has meant the absence of a main centripetal attraction to counteract the natural centrifugal vitality of sectional enthusiasm. I do not minimise the sin in the story of schism, though while sitting in a glass house I throw no stones about it. But I do not think that differing Christians could have been so scornful and independent of each other as they have been but for the depth of their sense of security about the faith. It is not only social and political differences which have made 'Church' and 'Chapel' in England so mutually bitter and contemptuous. It is not only long memories which have rendered Presbyterians derisive of Episcopalians. There has been no general

sense in all concerned that for Christian truth and faith and practice they needed one another. They could afford to rejoice in each other's weakness.[1] No vital common need has made them eager for each other's strength. They have been complacently divided.

This has been so till very lately. For until very lately the dogma of Biblical inerrancy has swayed—I will not say fired in the case of anything so incombustible—the general mind of our countrymen. This sway has not necessarily made the generality of men convinced Christians. It has mostly produced in them a vague assent. But it has been strong enough in the Churches to render the separated Christian congregations complacent in the face of division.

Yet it would be unfair to represent such complacency as the sole characteristic of separated Christians. For during last century there were strong movements in England towards unity. The most noteworthy were by-products of the evangelical revival. They were for the most part movements of undenominational and Biblical Christians.

They reinforce the point which I have tried to make. Such movements as the Y.M.C.A.,

[1] Contrast St. Paul: 'That all the members might entertain the same anxious care for one another's welfare.'—1 Cor. xii.

and the Salvation Army, and the Student Movement (in its *earliest* days) illustrate, as clearly as the divisions among Christians, the tremendous power and significance of the Gospel viewed as so much solid scriptural deposit. Men have been moved not only to separate but to unite, and in either case the firm foundation of Bible truth has been a dominant factor in their action. The fact that the Gospel seemed to stand by itself has facilitated unity as well as separation.

A representative instance in the missionary sphere has been the China Inland Mission. That has been a magnificent Bible-Christian Mission (the 'personnel' of which I am sure I am unworthy to criticise). It illustrates the splendidly practical force of an accepted dogma. For the Mission was based doctrinally upon the dogma of the literal 'Word of God.' Those who founded it said in so many words: 'Here, in "the Word," are the main things; here is the Gospel. Here too are China's 400 millions without the Gospel. Come, let us take the Gospel to China!' I believe that, at any rate at first, the Mission was untroubled by any difficulties as to the interpretation of Scripture. The whole energies of the missionaries were available for the propagation of its accepted truth.

Founded upon this basis and carried on with splendid devotion, the Mission illustrates

a certain theory and practice of unity. It is unity attained by the sinking of differences. Men such as the founders of this Mission have said: 'We have a certain body of primary and catholic (for all) Christian Gospel in a secure hold. It is there in the Word. Come, let us join together on main certainties and put them to the proof. Let us disregard the differences which divide the Churches!' I have sometimes wondered why the whole of Victorian Christianity, so far as it was aggressively Christian and missionary, did not go with this simple and effectual theory and practice. For there is no denying that some of the differences which divide the Churches are niggling and insignificant. At any rate this idea of unity in a hazy and loose form has still a powerful hold on the popular mind. Just as it is still true—though with many exceptions—that the man in the street defers in mind to the belief that the Bible as a whole is literally true (or that he would have to think so if he 'got religion'), so it is also true that, to the average British citizen, Christian unity (Rome excluded) is quite easily attainable on a basis of the sinking of differences. He argues that the Churches are concerned with the same message and are named by the same Name, and as he looks at them he says: 'They are substantially agreed; they use the same book; they are fighting the same devil; they are all going the same way. It is

only parsons and ecclesiastically-minded laymen who prevent them scrapping their differences and coming together on the basis of what they hold in common. With a little British common sense and practical ability the matter could be adjusted in a day.'

Such a view is too prevalent and is too often the expression of a real desire for Christian unity for it to be simply summarily dismissed. I cannot doubt that in it there is a message which the Spirit would deliver to the Churches. But I believe—for reasons which I will try to give—that it contains no healing balm for the deep wounds in the Body of Christ, and that to yield to it would be to imperil the object of its concern.

It has been seen then that the notion of the Gospel as truth which stands by itself independently of the fellowship of Christians in one body has operated powerfully both in divisive and unitive movements among large sections of Christendom. In particular, the Bible viewed as an infallible external authority has encouraged men to divide without the sense of injury done to the Gospel, and to unite without any real reconciliation of the things which they have valued in separation.

VI. Unity and Infallibility

BUT to-day infallibilities are gone; or they are going; or they will go. Let this be thankfully proclaimed. I believe with my whole soul that they are not in accordance with the will of God. They are out of harmony with the whole story of His dealings with the world. They disagree with our Lord's committal of Himself and His Gospel to the witness of men. They have acted as substitutes for reliance upon the guidance of the Spirit. They have been the brakes which human infirmity has applied to the advance of divine truth. They have engendered a security which has thrown faith off its one true object—the living God. They have been the cause of arrested movement. They have led to the entrenchment of an army that should be on the march. They have shut up the Church as a beleaguered garrison in a fortress, the walls of which its defenders have feverishly watched in the fear lest one breach should mean the surrender of the whole citadel. They have hindered the Christian society from casting itself forward in moral co-operation with the movement of the divine will. Their departure is the signal for the return of the great days of the Spirit.

By infallibilities I mean the clothing of any

expression of Christian truth or any organ of the Christian society with fixed and final and absolute authority. In particular the world is being delivered from the conception of the Bible as in every word certificated by God to be absolutely true.

This does not mean that there is no Christian revelation. It does not mean that no truth was once for all delivered to the saints. It does not mean that there is no truth in the Bible, or that the Bible is not the Word of God. It does not mean that the Gospel consists merely of so many human notions or ideals. It does not mean that there is no authority in the Church, or that there is no sure Christian light to live and walk by.

But it does mean that the truth as it is in Jesus was given to men. It does mean that the Christian revelation is not 'a thing in itself' out of relationship with receiving and apprehending faith. It does mean that the Gospel cannot be separated from the interpreting mind, the convincing witness, the contagious love of the Body of Christ. It does mean that conviction cannot buttress itself on any fixed support which is external to the life of the whole fellowship of the Spirit. It does mean that faith can rest on nothing but God.

In saying this I do not suggest that infallibilities have worked mechanically. It is of course true that men have not believed in

Christ on the bare authority of, say, the Pope or of the word of Scripture, but because of the working of the Spirit in their hearts, and the corroborating thought and witness of believers. There is no reason to be sceptically surprised at the record of the Bible Society with its witness to the independent power of Scripture to bring conviction to men the whole world over. It is a question of less or more. There is, and will be, less chance than heretofore of the 'Word of God' imparting its own message apart from all other testimony. The words of Scripture or of creeds have, and will have, less power to unfold their truth except as they live again in the minds and lives of men. There will be less efficacy in, and less deference to, bare authority.

If it is asked why this is so the only answer is that the world has changed. Men have the sense—which it is possible to exaggerate but not to deny—of living in a modern world. Not all the condemnation of the modern spirit as heady and self-opinionated can affect the truth of this. There is no gainsaying that recent generations have felt separated from their ancestors in their general ideas of the world. It is not to the point to say that they would be better off if they did not. They do. That being so, the sense of separation concentrates especially on the barriers to understanding which language raises where ideas have changed.

So, in order to seize again the meanings disguised by their expression, men have gone behind the expression and the thing expressed —that is, to the experience. And this on the principle that 'one touch of nature makes the whole world kin.' For when once conceptual and linguistic barriers are past, the separating centuries and distances dwindle, and man, whether ancient or modern, is revealed as essentially the same in mind and soul.

It may be said that in this way historical science has repaired its own ravages. The recent unfolding of the story of man has seemed to modernise the present and antiquate the past. But only temporarily. For historians have set to work to reconsider the data of history. They have recognised that history is written primarily, not upon parchment or paper, but on the experiencing hearts of men. History to-day is not so much the literary compilation of written records as the reanimation of those records as human documents. No doubt modern historians can claim no monopoly in this power of reconstructing the past in terms of flesh and blood. But perhaps they have been forced by an added sense of antiquity to be concrete rather than abstract in their methods. They have mastered and developed the power to seize the psychology in documents. They make ancient records to tell their story afresh by the sympathy with which they

enter into the experience which the records transcribe.

This process has received its most striking illustration in Biblical study. The records of the Bible have for so long been studied as directly given and authenticated by God that the human element in them has been overlooked. The great figures in the Bible, and above all its central Figure, have been so long associated with certain ideas, have been viewed so much under doctrinal and religiously conventional categories, that they have become lay figures. The blood has gone out of them, and their reality has been drained from them. But historical science, while often it has made them the victims of impossible theories—has analysed Abraham into the name of a tribe, has dissolved Jesus into a myth—has nevertheless been a quickening influence. It has clothed the dry bones of sacred history with flesh and blood, and has rounded them again 'into living men.' Thus the 'Word of God' lives again. It would never have come down to us as our inheritance had it not been given to men in their experience and written on the tablets of their hearts. The words of prophet and psalmist speak again, the testimony of the friends of Jesus is renewed in power, as historians enter through imagination and sympathy and concrete method into the experience which underlay them. Effigies descend

from pedestals, pictures step out of their frames or windows, mummies cast off their bandages, and re-enter the society of men. And this at the reanimating touch of sympathetic minds which make their living significance intelligible —that is, relate it to life as men know it. The truth of the Gospel, which is the truth in a Person given through persons, lives again through the co-operating fellowship of interpreting minds.

Here is the essential point to be seized. The absence of infallibility or absolute certainty in the inherited expressions and data of Christian faith, throws men for central reasons into dependence on one another. The failure of Bible or formula by themselves to disclose their full meaning heightens the value of the living mind and fellowship of the Church. Men do not call Jesus Lord simply because it is in the Bible; they do not believe in or assent to the Incarnation merely because it is in the Creed. Rather it is the evidence of the lordship of Jesus in a neighbouring life, it is the life-interpreting power of the doctrine of the Incarnation exhibited in a contemporary mind, which constrain them to share in a real possession of truth and life. They are moved to make their own essential venture of faith and self-giving, not because the Bible is true, but through the impact upon them of its truth alive in others. They do not call Jesus Lord save by the Spirit. They verify the deliberate purpose of Jesus in

entrusting Himself and His message to the witness of a society. They realise that the Way, the Truth and the Life is still incarnate.

Now if this be true—and it certainly is true of the younger generation—it is intensely important in its bearing on the question of Christian unity. We asked at the outset whether unity is vital to men's knowledge of Christ. In the past the thrust of fervent conviction and main loyalties has frequently pushed men to divide. Does it now drive towards their reunion? I believe that it does wherever thought is alive and sensitive. It is only where traditional dogmatism survives unimpaired, it is only where a fearful reluctance to sail the troubled seas of modern thought is predominant, that Christians are content to be separate. (The one rupture from the British Student Movement in my experience was by a group of young men who were holding frantically to the dogma of literal inspiration.) But wherever the old fixities have crumbled or weakened this contentedness wanes and a sense of common need grows. The need is for Christ. Who can exaggerate its urgency? Is there any other rock in a shaking world? Is there any other main light by which to navigate the tremendous seas now running? The need for Christ is for more than security of faith. It is for more than intellectual comfort. It is not for an ark in the storm, nor for

a charm against danger, nor for a drug against pain. It is the need of man—awakened by convulsion, faced by great tasks, unsatiated by pleasure—for God. Younger people—many of them—are looking for Christ, and so they look at the Churches. Theirs is a searching gaze. For the Churches seem to hide Christ, to dim His light and to deny His power. All the more is any evidence of His life welcome to them. They are thankful for any authentic note of experience, understanding or achievement which is evidence of His reality. They greet such evidence wherever it is evident. They put no denominational embargoes on it. For they have been shaken out of the Churches' former complacency in the face of separation. They need whatever faith and courage and power for the battle of life is available anywhere. They are therefore ready to find, and in a measure do find, Christ alive and at work, not in one Church alone, but wherever men are named by His Name. This gives them the sense that division is weakness. They see that the truth of God in Christ in its fullness and wholeness surpasses the apprehension and witness of the broken Body.

VII. Diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit

THE task before the Churches — the divided Church—has been defined. It is the recovery of the secret of an original spiritual vitality. The recovery is necessary to the Church for its own hold upon the truth and life of God. It is necessary for the Church's witness to the world. The faith of the early Christian fellowship brought power and hope into a secular civilisation which, despite all its excellencies and attainments, was sick and powerless. Once again to-day a secular civilisation replete with its own gifts and achievements is in need of a spiritual dynamic—a character-building capacity—indiscoverable among its own resources. The more highly one rates the wonders of modern culture, the more urgent grows the sense of its incompleteness and lack. Whole worlds of new knowledge and resultant power have been gained by modern discoveries, but the gain does not remove the possibility of spiritual loss. It means no depreciation of modern civilisation to say that for its own health and peace—for the free possession and manipulation by itself of its own powers—it must draw upon sources of moral wisdom and

spiritual inspiration other than its own. Left to itself it threatens to destroy itself. Human society to-day is top-heavy with the accumulated machinery of power and of pleasure. It is distracted by its own complexity and weighed down by its own possibilities. It lacks character at the centre. The centre is the hearts and wills of men. In laying hands on an ever-extending mechanism of power men do not escape from their own inner capacity for self-ruin and self-disintegration. Thus it is they need, both individually and corporately, an allegiance to an end beyond themselves. Every increase in the capacity of men or societies or nations to insist on their rights and interests does but reinforce this need. They need an end to which their resources may serve as means. They need Another *cui servire regnare.* They are restless and will become more so till they find peace in co-operation with the will of God. In His will is the world's peace. The whole secret of Christ is that He makes possible the devotion of men to the accomplishment of the divine will, and provides an all-inclusive end to human energies. He does that through the working of the Spirit. He committed to the Spirit the reproduction in others of His own devotion to one end—the Father's will. Through the guidance of the Spirit the Church was to apprehend the Gospel of the Kingdom.

The task therefore of the Church, both for

its own sake and the world's, is to be led by the Spirit into the truth of Christ. It must open itself—it is opening itself ?—to His guidance so that it may understand, both for faith and service, the truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom. It has to do so with the explicit recognition that it can depend on nothing else. It cannot draw a line, whether at John Wesley, or at the Reformation, or at the first six centuries, or at the New Testament, and rest satisfied that *there* is a foundation which needs no testing or a position which needs no exploration. It has to admit that no fixed security is to be found in conformity to the letter of anything in the Christian tradition. It cannot interpret the world in exact agreement with St. Paul's mind about Scripture. It cannot even repose in acceptance of every element in the assumptions which our Lord shared with His generation. Yet that does not mean that it has to manufacture its own Gospel for itself. Rather it has to receive from the Holy Spirit of God the whole truth of Christ undiminished in essence but disencumbered of accidents.

The Church, then, has to recover knowledge of, and faith in, the guidance of the Holy Spirit. His was the power of energetic life of which the impact upon the world is recorded in the New Testament. It was life manifested in a corporate unity, characterised by an inexhaustible wealth of various gifts and powers.

The Church therefore has to ask, 'Where are those various gifts—where are the different manifestations of the same Spirit to-day?' It cannot believe that the Holy Spirit has been withdrawn. Doubtless He has been forgotten and neglected and hindered. But it is of the very essence of the whole Christian good news about God that He is the great Constant, Whose truth and power and love are ever available. God, Who was revealed by that which He wrought in Christ, is ever present to His Church, if remembered for its salvation, if forgotten for its judgment. It is essential unbelief to suppose that on His side all the barriers are not down, and all His resources are not available. It is infidelity to believe that the Holy Spirit was not once and for all 'shed abroad.'

The Church too is weak, but it is in existence. The Churches are divided, but they are not dead. A first requirement to-day is that men should believe in the Church with the love and loyalty which as such are critical. There is current to-day—I speak about the Church of England—a great amount of sterile 'grousing' at the Church, which is sterile because it is unloving. There seem to be many who wait to profess any loyalty to the Church until it accords with their notions of effectiveness. Loyalty to the Church as to one's country should (in no depreciatory sense) be irrational—that is, not for any reason as that it is great or rich

or powerful or efficient, but because it is the Church of God, to be loved and believed in and served as such. The true patriot loves his country all the more if she is weak and faulty. And his love is therefore powerful and fruitful. If a passionate loyalty were in a great deal of the criticism of the Church, it would work with fruitful and transforming effect. Superior moderns and discontented Church-folk ask whether the Church can survive. The very question annihilates the hope of better things. The first thing needful is a belief—defiant of appearances and undismayed by the world—in the Church of God against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. The task for Christians therefore is to seek to recognise the operation of the Spirit in the broken Body of Christ. Do the separated parts manifest the divine operations of one spiritual energy? If so, do the possessors of differing gifts need one another? In separation—in antagonism—are they lacking and impoverished?

I believe that a study of contemporary Christianity yields affirmative answers to these questions. Everywhere in Christendom there seem to be evidences of the gifts of the Spirit, but of gifts which for their healthy development need the balancing, correction, criticism, stimulus of other gifts. It seems to be a law of life that no qualities are free from their own defects—no one development of spiritual

endowment which by itself is not one-sided. This is evidence that unity between complementary elements is natural to human society. So with the Church of God. The division of Christendom has meant the tearing apart of mutually necessary gifts of the Spirit. It has left different spiritual qualities the prey to their own defects. The distinct nature both of the gifts or qualities and of their defects has been disguised—as has been implied above—by the prevalence of a common Christianity. A delicate differentiation of spiritual endowment has been overlaid and almost obliterated by a solid weight of accepted tradition. In particular the common adherence of different Churches to a mass of fixed and independent Biblical truth has given them an unnatural sameness and has disguised their differences. Different Churches have not been aware of their partiality. They have rather claimed each one to be the sufficient representative of the whole truth of the Gospel.

But now that solidities and crystallisations are in solution, the differentiations which were, so to say, congealed are being melted out and are reacquiring their essential power. This is not true everywhere, for there is a great deal of traditional Christianity which desperately resists the action upon itself of solvent forces. Yet in that very resistance it is possible to detect a conservative working of the Spirit,

which but for man-made separations He would correct and supplement by promptings toward venture and renewal.

There is then, I suggest, much to be learnt as to the impoverishment of the Church's spiritual life, through the divorce of gifts which are meant by God to contribute to each other's efficiency. Extreme instances are the most significant.

I should go, therefore, first to Roman Catholicism and to the Friends. On the one hand is institutional, hierarchical, sacramental, complex Christianity. On the other is a religion of the inner light cultivated in extreme simplicity without ministry, priesthood or external rites. In the one a main emphasis lies on the submission of the individual to authority, on his conformity to tradition, on loyalty to the past. In the other the individual claims his unfettered freedom to attend to nothing but the present utterance of the Spirit. The glory of Roman Catholicism is that it is a great hospitable 'way' wherein the wayfaring man does not err. Where it is strong it is still the Church of the people *par excellence*. It is a spacious nursery for children in which, securely fenced about, they can play. It is a great storehouse of religious custom and tradition, full of widely-garnered knowledge of human nature, its spiritual experiences and its needs. It is expert in the art of religion and in the

mastery of religious cultus and technique. It is the 'old firm.'

The glory of the Society of Friends is the simplicity of quiet and concentrated communion with the unseen. It is a small society whose life is wound to a height too great for the many. It is not a playground for children. As compared with the gathered and blazing lamps of Rome it is one devoutly-tended and sheltered light.

Or take another instance, two theological colleges representative of traditions not so markedly in contrast as the Friends and Rome, and yet characteristically different. The one Anglo-Catholic: its life centring on the chapel and the altar; its daily and regular liturgical routine closing round the individual student as an enveloping and sustaining environment; its atmosphere of tradition and continuity with the past; its beauty of holiness. The other Congregationalist: its dominant interest the preparation of preachers of the Word; its devotional life centred in the prayer meeting supported by the students; its atmosphere of interest in the present and readiness for movement in the future; its absence of æsthetic appeal.

Or take two services. The one the Eucharist: the full rite resplendent with music and colour and ordered reverence; the insignificance of the individual celebrant by contrast

with the focus of attention—Divine Presence; its innermost heart of silent adoration. The other a Presbyterian service: free from all ornament; its prominent figure in the foreground—the black-gowned preacher, whose mind and personality mediate the things of the Spirit to others; their guidance by the words of another to the Throne of Grace.

Such instances as these point to a schism between things which are complementary to one another. Take order and freedom (or routine and spontaneity). Health and sanity lie in their combination and interplay. Divorce order from freedom and it becomes tyranny. Maintain an unalterable routine and it becomes a prison-house. Divorce freedom from order and it becomes licence. Reliance on spontaneity becomes a heavy burden. So in regard to the two colleges. The regular unvarying order of corporate devotion in the one, while it sustains and surrounds the individual student, tends to confine him and leave him with little outlet for self-expression; while the demands of the prayer meeting in the other tend to surpass and exhaust the student's capacity for voluntary co-operation. The devotional atmosphere of the one is apt to become overloaded and oppressive: that of the other to be arid and desolate. There is an excess of imposed cultus in the one, a deficiency in the other.

Such instances might be multiplied, but it is more profitable to pass to the main question which they suggest—namely, Are not Catholicism and Evangelicalism necessary to one another? That is the problem of Christian unity in its length and breadth. A great deal of discussion on the subject of unity is vitiated by the limitation in its range. To discuss unity on the basis of leaving Catholicism out of account is like discussing the League of Nations on the basis of leaving all but white races out of account. The world is one and it is small. It is useless to consider unity merely provincially or even imperially. It is a world-problem. Not that action everywhere must wait till the extremes meet. But that it will be partial or provisional till they do.[1] I believe that the dissolution of the bedrock of an infallible Scripture has destroyed the basis of Evangelical independence.

[1] It is just here that the position of the Church of England is remarkable. It holds within itself the two traditions—Catholic and Evangelical. Its strength lies in their combination and mutually contributory influence in the practical working of the Church and in its thought. It contains, that which I think to be hardly found elsewhere, an Evangelical Catholicism. It contains men who are both priestly and prophetic. Its weakness is due to the unwillingness of extreme elements in either tradition to co-operate. There are Catholic and Protestant sections within the Church of England which are characteristically disloyal to it. They work powerfully to make anarchy of its inclusiveness. It is interesting to note that both alike are distinguished by obscurantism in thought.

At the same time the same dissolving forces which have worked on the Bible are also at work on the bases of Catholicism, though the fact is generally ignored or repudiated by Catholics. The two sides must come together because they can no longer afford to be mutually antagonistic and contemptuous, but need each other's strength. I think that a discerning free thinker could make a formidably strong case as to the declension in power and influence of both Catholicism and Evangelicalism in separation from one another. Doubtless the consciousness of mutual need and reinforcement is far from universal. It is not true as yet of Rome. That is because the Roman Church still suppresses movements of thought. It dams out the waters whose currents have shifted anchorages elsewhere. It still offers to men the refuge—the inviting refuge—of an absolute and infallible authority. It is committed to the 'all or nothing' position. It holds that position at a tension such as also racks the upholders of literal inspiration. It will hold that position until the tension snaps.

But all Catholicism is not Roman, and within Roman Catholicism it is possible to distinguish Catholicism. And wherever Catholicism is to be found East or West it needs for its life and morale the spiritual vitality, the moral energy of the Evangelical tradition. Everywhere too Evangelicalism needs

the doctrinal coherence, the religious cultus, the sacramentally-given divine presence of Catholicism.

There is, I think, a wealth of evidence in support of this mutual need. The mutuality has its roots in the relations of priest and prophet in the Old Testament. It is confirmed by the ministry of Jesus Who, though a layman and self-identified with the prophetic succession, lived in loyal conformity with the Church of His nation. He brought the power of His prophetic criticism to bear upon the old Israel from within. The mutuality reappears in the double foundation of the New Israel upon Apostles and Prophets. It links together the Word and the Sacraments. It can be traced through the complementary antitheses of order and freedom, tradition and spontaneity, gift and appropriation of gift, faith and works, corporate and individual religion.

History of course is not as neat as logic, and things, unlike diagrams, are not in black and white. Thus, for instance, Evangelicalism (with its devotion to the preaching of the Word) is not devoid of Sacraments. Catholicism (that is essentially sacramental Christianity) is not devoid of preaching. The contrasted things are not black and white. Nor are they grey. As against grey the one is black, the other is white. Catholicism is characteristically sacramental.

As such it is apt to undervalue preaching. I remember the boast of a Roman Catholic padre that he had not preached one sermon during all his months at the front. Evangelicalism, on the other hand, is characteristically prophetic. The sermon tends to oust the sacrament. As a Baptist friend said to me, 'I don't mind saying that the Holy Communion holds no prominent place in my personal religion.'

Is it not evident that the two are necessary to one another? For one thing they represent two ideas of the Church which history has forced into rivalry but which are fitted for alliance. I think that it is in regard to their conception of the Church that the differences between the two traditions go deepest.

The Catholic idea of the Church is that of the given family of God which is intended to embrace all His children. It is a system intertwined with the whole life of the community, consecrating with sacramental blessing every stage of the individual's progress from the cradle to the grave. It is the inclusive, extensive idea of the Church, which aims at making of society one Christian family. Entry into the Church is by baptism extended even to infants.

The evangelical or prophetic idea of the Church is that of the remnant. Its aim is a religious community made by the aggregation of individuals each of whom has personal

assurance of personal salvation. It makes the requirement upon individuals of first-hand knowledge of the new life in Christ. Its note is intension and exclusiveness. It is inclined to make baptism the seal of adult religious experience.

The strength and weakness of either idea of the Church, as they have been embodied in practice, are evident. The strength of Catholicism is that it is inclusive and for all. It is the net with all kinds of fish within it. It provides a spiritual home to the 'average sensual man,' to those little endowed with capacity for religious experience, to those to whom religion is primarily a matter of obligation and duty. But it has been perpetually liable to degenerate in the direction of an over-inclusive and conventional membership. It becomes so embracing as to mean little. Its salt becomes savourless. The Church of England is Catholic at any rate in this regard. A padre's memories of how little 'C. of E.' meant on 70 per cent. of the identity-discs in France throng my mind.

On the other hand, the strength of Evangelicalism is that it aims at real and not nominal Church membership. It invites men to share unreservedly in religious experience. In so doing it is perpetually liable to over-exclusiveness by making membership in practice to depend on the possession of a certain type of religious temperament. It encourages the

excuse in the average man that religion is for those who are 'made that way.' It is apt to unchurch the unmystical and unemotional. It is tempted to deny the membership in Christ of those who, without any 'religious experience,' live faithful lives of obedient service. However much I may have regretted the nominal character of their 'C. of E.' membership, there are hosts of men whom I met as a padre—subalterns, flying-pilots, sergeants, privates—whom I simply cannot think of as finding their spiritual home in the intense centres of unreserved evangelical piety.

I do not think that these weaknesses can be corrected by any third party, but only by the mutual influence upon each other of the two traditions. I fervently believe that the aptitude of either to criticise and antagonise the other is an index that they are meant by God to serve and save each other. In separation both are only very partially aware of their own defects. They are glaringly obvious to each other. Each is like the parson who is blissfully unaware of the strange and unearthly note which has crept into his clerical voice to the affliction of others. An immense power of remedy and healing would be released if the fervour of mutual criticism became mutually contributory.

The influence, for instance, which would save Catholicism from acquiescence in too low

a standard of nominal membership would be the raising of evangelical protest and challenge from within its own borders. This would be the prophetic element correcting the priestly. It would be the challenge of morality to religion, of personality to mechanism. It would be intension counteracting extension. So, too, in regard to Catholic disregard of the rights of the mind. By itself it acquiesces in superstition for the sake of the *charbonnier*. The jealousy of Evangelicalism—as in Germany or Scotland—for the reasonableness of faith is the antidote to the Catholic tendency to care more for religious comfort than for truth. But let the challenge of conscience and reason be isolated—let the prophetic and rationalistic elements hive off from the institutional so that their protests are raised not from within the latter but from without, and the result is a waste of their force and a deterioration of that quality. Somehow the protagonists of personal religion become involved in self-regard and self-congratulation. They become the selected few. Somehow the champions of reason become infected with a superiority destructive of loyalty to the Gospel. Both alike suffer from ceasing to love and serve the one brotherhood of believers.

I venture to illustrate further the way in which the two traditions in separation are the victims of the weaknesses native to their strength.

The strength of Catholic sacramentalism

lies in the insistence on divine gift and operation as that which is given objectively to faith to receive. The invitation of the Mass is to forget oneself and to worship our Lord. But unless this insistence be influenced and corrected by a stress laid on the importance of subjective appropriation of the divine gift and of witness in life consistent with the adoration of the Divine Presence, sacramentalism is ever threatened by degeneration into a mechanical *opus operatum*, and into a religiosity divorced from life. A man may go to our Lord in the Mass, and go to the devil for the rest of the day. Or he goes to confession concurrently with a settled habit of loose living.

Conversely the strength of Evangelicalism lies in jealousy for the faith—the subjective disposition—which men bring to their intercourse with God. But unless this is closely related to an insistence on the objectivity of divine gift and presence, Evangelicalism is tempted to measure the reality of such gift and presence by the intensity of subjective feelings and moods. What men do comes to outweigh what God does, and the result is the extravagances of a religion of human activity and self-expression, such as are most clearly to be seen in America.

Again, as regards doctrine. Here the strength of Catholicism lies in conservatism.

The strength of Evangelicalism—when once it has ceased to fight for the repulse of Biblical criticism—is in boldness of inquiry. The heart of Catholicism is drenched with credal loyalty. It holds the central truth of the Incarnation in a passionate embrace. It does so in an association of the supernatural and the sacramental. Catholic devotion ever aspires in the mystery of the altar to the Lamb as it had been slain but alive for evermore in the heavenly places. It centres round Bethlehem and Calvary as ever-present realities. This is its glory. It is the fire which glows on its religious hearth. Yet it is not enough. Jesus so worshipped becomes detached from the work that He came to do on earth. He tends to stand in between men and the Father, Whose Name He came to glorify, Whose Kingdom He came to establish. He tends to absorb the devotion which is due to the living God. Jesus adored in the Mass loses association with God's world and its tremendous issues. He becomes 'the Prisoner in the Tabernacle.' He is remembered in the Host but seems to be forgotten in the market-place. He reigns inside the Churches but not outside, in a quasi-heaven but not on earth.

The mind of Evangelicalism, on the other hand, is vividly sensitive to the thought of the age. It pays but slight allegiance to creeds. But it is deeply concerned to apply the faith in God revealed in Christ to the secular struggle.

It is eager that Christ, dwelling in the heart, may be an active influence in the world. It reacts from other-worldly saintliness. So it goes back to the Gospel, to find there a sanction for programmes of social reform. It seeks to state 'what Jesus would do in Chicago.' It pursues 'the quest of the historical Jesus.' But as it does so it is liable to much theological volatility. It is tempted to reduce Christianity from a faith in Jesus to the faith of Jesus. It is often inclined to remain satisfied with a revelation of the Father in the teaching of Jesus, and to stop short of the revelation of the Father in the Son. It is hard pressed, in deference to naturalism and rationalism, and in sympathy for the modern mind, to evacuate the gospel of miracle. Yet it struggles to preserve that which has been pre-eminent in its tradition—devotion to Jesus. And it does this by straining after the immediacy of mystical and emotional experience, while it is suspicious of sacramental ways of approach. It would find Christ in the heart rather than at the altar. It longs to lay hold upon Him at hours of exalted mood and heightened feeling rather than to be found by Him at His regular and reliable trysting-place.

At the risk of being tedious I would emphasise the closeness of the connection between sacramental worship and doctrinal apprehension. This is due to the fact that the challenge

to faith of the sacramental operation of God is the same in kind as the challenge to faith of His action at a certain moment in history. The exposure of men to the one has a reflex influence upon their hold upon the other. This influence, and the need of this influence, has increased ever since the very words of the Bible have ceased to be viewed as an external gift of God. The Bible itself used to be sacrament enough for a multitude of Christians. They were in immediate touch with the particular action of God.

It is precisely this element of particularity in God's working—a thing so deeply Incarnationist—which is, I think, most challenging to faith to-day. It is the interpretation, in terms of absolute and eternal value, of one little link in the seemingly endless chain of history. It is the deriving of universal significance from particular events.

Men's minds to-day are imaginatively oppressed by the size and age of the universe. As has been often remarked, the work of Copernicus, in destroying a geocentric — earth-centred — view of the universe, was only completed and forced home on the general mind of the world by the scientific research of last century. At the same time, the favourite categories which are used to interpret the whole history of the world are continuity and uniformity. They suit its immensity. Hence the tendency in modern

religious thought towards pantheism. The view of things which is apt to be most congenial to the minds of men to-day is that of God as the Soul of the world, Who reveals Himself progressively in the age-long process of its growth, and finds in man the chief organ of His manifestation. Harmoniously with this view Christ appears in the story of man as not of unique importance, but as the supreme instance of the indwelling of man at all times by the One Spirit. Nor is the process thought of as ended, for if Christ be the classical instance of the inspired man, then the sufficient essence of religion is to become as he. The point of Christ is that men are Christs. They are the further manifestations of the Soul of the universe. As contrasted with this, it is deeply challenging to men's minds to be asked to take One Figure out of the infinite human series—that peasant of Nazareth—and one little set of events in the whole unimaginable succession of events, and therein to find the final revelation and the unique operation of the One Source of all things. I think this must have been in the mind of Mr. Lowes Dickinson when he objected to being asked to call the author of the stars by a pet name. It is the challenge of the Incarnation. It is the challenge of particularity. It is far more congenial to us to swim in a certain detachment from any particular event in time and space, and to shelter in an inner world of mind

and spirit which is separate from the hard facts of history. God somehow everywhere, all-pervasive, all-embracing—Him we allow without great difficulty. God there on the Cross, 'without a city wall,' between the two thieves—from Him we recoil. This too, I think, is the challenge of the Sacraments. It is the unrelenting demand upon us to meet with Him in operation *there* at His table, there at the font, there at the laying on of hands, which affronts. It seems to bring the infinite and eternal into such a trifling commerce with men. Better to be our own priests on the hill-side: better to receive some touch upon our souls from the One Spirit as we gaze at a sunset glory.

Yet it is, I cannot doubt, a saving challenge. It enforces the characteristic value of the Incarnation as holding together the transcendence and immanence of God. No Christian should do anything but acclaim the reality of moments of mystical contact with that spiritual principle—

> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky and in the mind of man:
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts,
> And rolls through all things.

But it is not given to everyone to feel that—

> Presence which disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts;

that 'sense sublime.' Such contact with the immanence of God is commonly imperilled by the rude insistence of everyday existence. Such knowledge of God becomes fugitive. An insecurity besets a religion of immanence. God vaguely everywhere becomes God precisely nowhere. Hence the saving glory of the Incarnation. It seals the reality of every mystical vision with the good news of the Word made flesh. It illuminates the innumerable stars with the glory of the Star of Bethlehem.

I cannot doubt that the Sacraments carry on this work of the Incarnation. It is not a mere theological *cliché* to see in them the 'extension of the Incarnation.' It is no accident that Catholicism, in its essential sacramentalism, has embraced the heart of the people. It offers, not only to elevated thoughts or to the sense sublime of poets and mystics, but to the simple faith and adoration of weary workers, the free and unearned coming-down of God in His love to meet with His children. It mediates to ordinary mortals the littleness, the homeliness, the friendliness, the presence, the love of the Eternal God. It appeals everywhere not to the childish but to the childlike mind.

Nor can I doubt that it is this challenge of the Sacraments of which Evangelicalism, in its separation from the objectivity of 'the Word,' stands in great need. It is also that to which it would wonderfully contribute. I

do not think it is mere *parti pris* to see in that tradition to-day an innate tendency towards subjectivism. It wavers in its hold upon the Incarnation. This would be corrected by the sacramental practice to which Evangelicals have sat more or less loose. They who are eager to enjoy 'good times'—times of vivid spiritual experience—would benefit by the discipline of regular obedience. They would be fortified in their knowledge of Christ.

But they would give as well as receive. They would bring to sacramental communion the fervour of intimacy with Him at all times and places. They would bring a jealousy that He Who is manifested at the altar should be evident everywhere. They would rescue the Prisoner from His Tabernacle. They would help to give a fuller meaning yet to the 'extension of the Incarnation.' They would do much to find 'every bush afire with God.'

VIII. The Need of Conference

THE lengthy discussion in the last chapter prompts the question: What, then, can be done? I do not think that anything can be done about Christian unity except where action has been preceded by much joint prayer and conference on the part of separated Christians. The preliminary to action is a fundamental change of heart and mind. That has to be sought, earned, and received. The preliminary to a unity which shall be grounded in spiritual reality is the gift of eager attention by the divided Churches to two questions:—(*a*) Do they need each other?—or, in other words, Are they parts of a divided whole? (*b*) If so, what can bind them together again?—or, What can be the expression of the unity which is recognised as existent though broken?

I am thinking primarily of what can be done in Great Britain. Whatever is done here will be of interest and effect elsewhere. Here is a local instance of a ubiquitous problem. Discussion and conference on the subject are spreading. They need to spread among the rank and file of the Church. They have been shared in hitherto too exclusively by Church leaders

and University teachers.[1] There is special obligation on the Churches in Great Britain to labour at the problem. Nowhere else in the world do extremes meet so easily. Types of Christianity which elsewhere are hardly in contact can confer here. For everywhere conference by Evangelicals with Roman Catholics is impossible or is very restricted. And it is only recently that intercourse with the Orthodox Church has been practicable.[2] But there is a sufficiently developed Catholicism within the comprehensiveness of the Church of England to make discussion here significant of a contact between the two main traditions in Christendom. Conference must be based by all

[1] Cf. Lambeth Conference, 1908: Report of Committee appointed to consider and report upon the subject of Reunion and Intercommunion, p. 155:—'In the opinion of the Committee much would be done to promote a more cordial mutual understanding, which is the necessary preliminary to all projects of reunion, if the members of our Communion would take pains to study the doctrines and appreciate the positions of those who are separated from us, and would be careful to avoid in speech and act anything savouring of intolerance or arrogance. Towards this end the Committee recommend that private meetings of ministers and laymen of our own and other Churches should frequently be held, in which by common study of the Word of God, by frank and friendly discussion, and by united prayer, they could at once realise and deepen the sense of union in the fellowship of Christ.'

[2] It has been increased by the war through contact with Serbians.

parties on the assumption that in Christ, as the revelation of the One God, is a wholeness of life and truth and love of which each Church has but a partial apprehension. It must be made on the basis of a generous mutual recognition that all are part-partakers of the riches of Christ. Conference would be vitiated from the start by the claim of one party to be wholly in the right while others are in error.[1] A clean cut must be made with the idea of the mere absorption by the Church of England of the other Churches. The point rather is for all parties to discover

[1] Cf. passage in Second Interim Report of a sub-Committee appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and by representatives of the English Free Church Commissions, in connection with the proposed World Conference of Faith and Order :—'The first fact which we agree to acknowledge is that the position of Episcopacy in the greater part of Christendom as the recognized organ of the unity and continuity of the Church, is such that the members of the Episcopal Churches ought not to be expected to abandon it in assenting to any basis of Reunion.

'The second fact which we agree to acknowledge is that there are a number of Christian Churches not accepting the Episcopal order, which have been used by the Holy Spirit in His work of enlightening the world, converting sinners and perfecting saints. They came into being through reaction from grave abuses in the Church at the time of their origin, and were led in response to fresh apprehensions of divine truth to give expression to certain types of Christian experience, aspiration and fellowship, and to secure rights of the Christian people which had been neglected or denied.'

that each holds in trust for contribution to the Church of the future. Emphasis, therefore, must fall in the first place on the strength of the separated bodies rather than on their weakness. But this must be followed by confession of weakness and by candid mutual criticism. Only so can the sense grow that poverty in one tradition can be supplied by the riches of another.

Such conference would be grounded on the hopeful belief that past separation has not been merely wasteful—that God has a fuller and richer unity to bestow than could have been realised had not men in times past fought for this or that neglected element in the fullness of Christ. It is futile to ask men to repudiate their spiritual ancestry. Loyalty to the past can never be overborne by force of diplomacy or deference to expediency, or even by a sense of weakness in the present. At the same time inquiry must be aimed at the bringing together by God of essential elements and not at the perpetuation of the minutiæ of difference. Profound changes in the whole circumstances of Christians have rendered obsolete and indifferent things about which their ancestors contended passionately in the past. I judge that many of the reasons for past separation within Nonconformity look trivial and accidental from the standpoint of the present. In nothing is the guidance of the Spirit more needed than in the discrimination of

essence from accident and the attainment of a proportion of faith. For, as we have seen, the unity to be attained is not a unity apart from diversity but *in* diversity. There will be a temptation to minimise all distinctions and to arrive at a highest or a lowest common measure of agreement apart from differences. That would be to pursue an abstraction to which there is no counterpart in reality.[1] It is always

[1] Cf. Lambeth Conference, 1908: Encyclical, p. 42:—'Our Resolutions represent, for the most part, the present situation of our public relations with Churches more or less widely separated from us. They may seem to show the remoteness rather than the nearness of corporate reunion. But before that consummation can be reached there must come a period of preparation. This preparation must be made by individuals in many ways, by co-operation in moral and in social endeavour and in promoting the spiritual interests of mankind, by brotherly intercourse, by becoming familiar with one another's characteristic beliefs and practices, by the increase of mutual understanding and appreciation. All this will be fruitful in proportion as it is dominated by a right ideal of reunion. We must set before us the Church of Christ as He would have it, one Spirit and one body, enriched with all those elements of divine truth which the separated communities of Christians now emphasize severally, strengthened by the interaction of all the gifts and graces which our divisions now hold asunder, filled with all the fulness of God. We dare not, in the name of peace, barter away those precious things of which we have been made stewards. Neither can we wish others to be unfaithful to trusts which they hold no less sacred. We must fix our eyes on the Church of the future, which is to be adorned with all the precious things both theirs and ours. We must constantly desire not compromise but comprehension, not uniformity but unity.'

possible on paper to draw a line and place common agreements on one side of it and differences on the other. But in actual life the agreements and differences are interfused. There is a community of faith between a Roman Catholic and a Friend. Both believe in our Lord. But their hold on Him is characteristically different. Ask them to divest themselves of their distinctiveness and *ipso facto* they divest themselves of their unity. There is 'no road' in that direction. But hope is bright that men will be brought together in the unity of the One Lord, Whose sameness they identify in the diversity of His manifold operations.

Yet I recognise the great difficulties which will beset such conferences as I have in mind. As I think of the actual attitude of many clergy of all kinds, and of the relations existing between Church and Free Church congregations, I wonder whether what I have written is not full of the counsels of perfection. 'I am not prepared to spend my time trying to mix oil and water,' writes a vicar with reference to interdenominational fellowship among chaplains.

But nevertheless I have solid ground for being hopeful. For in all that I have attempted to say, I have been trying to interpret the experience I have shared with others in the Student Christian Movement. To touch the Student Movement to-day at any point is to

touch the whole world. For a chain of colleges girdles the world, and there are few colleges into which a representative of the movement has not penetrated to claim the service of students for Christ and the Kingdom of God. National student movements have developed all over the world, and the Federation which links them together may fairly be called a microcosm. There is much which might be written about the spiritual and moral phenomena revealed among the students of to-day. Nothing that I have said in these pages about the dissolution of fixed traditions is too strong when read in the light of the movement and upheaval of thought among men and women students in colleges everywhere. The Student Movement began with a certain evangelical *naïveté*. Its American leaders made their first aim to win volunteers for the mission field, and this on the assumption that there was little doubt in students' minds about the Gospel to be carried thither. This assumption was so strong that they believed that, if only the wills of enough men and women were moved, the world could be evangelised in one generation. This gave to student volunteers a stirring watchword—the evangelisation of the world in this generation. But the underlying assumption has proved insecurely grounded, for it has become increasingly plain that the problem is not only to win men and women as Gospel messengers,

but to clear up their doubtful minds as to what the Gospel message is. The only reliable assumption which can be made about the student field to-day is that it is full of a hopeful uncertainty. The younger generation are asking radical questions; but they are verifying the great promise of our Lord that they who seek shall find, that to them who knock it shall be opened.

Incidentally the Student Movement casts a beam of searching light on the length and breadth of organised Christianity. It is hardly too much to say that on the Continent the Church, whether Catholic or Protestant, has lost the younger people, or is on the way to losing them. Yet the leaders of the World's Student Federation fully recognise that the task of the national movement is not to build up students in the faith in separation from the Church whether Catholic or Evangelical, but to call forth from the Churches all the guidance for students which they are alive enough to give, and to make ex-students a regenerating influence within the Churches. The deliberate and acquired policy of the movement in regard to divided Christendom is to receive from it and give to it the maximum possible. There is special ground for hope that in the Near East where doors are open into the Orthodox Church, as they are not in Roman Catholic lands, the Student Movement may

be the means under God of bringing to Catholicism from within the impetus and stimulus of evangelical truth and faith and power.

I have touched here on the Student Movement in its world-wide aspect. It has been of deep significance as a means of promoting unity at home. It does not make Christian unity its direct aim, which is to call men and women to the service of Christ in every profession and the whole world over. But in the pursuit of its aim it is in intimate contact with the problem of the divided Church. Its conferences are the meeting-place of representatives of the width of ecclesiastical separation. 'Friends' are, for instance, brought into touch there with men who have been reared in the Catholic tradition. The give and take in student discussions is free and unrestrained and undiplomatic. There is opportunity, hard to parallel elsewhere, of mutual understanding. I think this is especially true of the Theological College Department. That is the side of the movement in which its interdenominational basis operates most plainly and freely. For the department is the federation not of individuals but of colleges which are characteristically representative of the different Churches. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that the friendships formed by 'Theologicals' in the British Student Movement are transforming the prospects of Christian

unity in Great Britain. I go back with gratitude to such experience when, for instance (as I have said), I hear interdenominational relations likened to the mixing of oil and water. For I know—and take no credit for knowing—that the intercourse between differing Christians in my generation is, in virtue of its candour and its realised sense that old controversies are assuming new and hopeful shapes, the coming together of inheritors of traditions sundered in the past but meant by God to serve one another in the future. And therefore I believe that as the participants in such a precious experience pass into the adult ranks of the Churches they will make possible and fruitful mutual understanding between the main bodies of 'Church' and 'Chapel' of which I have spoken. Nor is this merely a future hope. Rather it is a movement already on foot.

I recur then to the two questions the candid discussion of which are, I believe, the preliminary to a deeply-founded unity. They are: —(*a*) Do the separated Churches need one another? (*b*) If so, what can express the unity to which the mutual sense of need is witness?

As regards (*a*) I have already said a good deal in the preceding pages by way of answer. But I want to get closer to the question by attempting to answer the question: What can the Presbyterian and Free Churches give

to the Church of England to supply its need and reinforce its weakness ?

I believe that the Church of England needs the prophetic gift, the theological and intellectual wisdom, the teaching power of the Presbyterians. I believe it needs the passion for personal religion and conversion — the evangelism—which distinguishes Baptists and Methodists. I believe it needs the spiritual freedom and audacity of Congregationalism. I believe it needs the powers of organisation manifested in the sphere of the Y.M.C.A. (which is characteristically and mainly a nonconformist association). I believe it needs the liberalism and conscience of nonconformity. I believe it needs the preaching capacity, the powers of democratic fellowship and of lay co-operation which are manifest in all the non-Episcopalian bodies. I believe it needs the knowledge of the Holy Spirit both in devotion and philanthropy which none possess in so high a degree as the Friends. I believe it needs—to go further afield—the gift of healing, which accounts for the existence and errors of Christian Science.

I do not mean that the Church of England is wholly without those things of which I think it is in need. It is in the strict sense of the word a con-fused body, and as such it is variously endowed in spiritual gifts. Yet I cannot be doubtful of certain main weaknesses in it which need reinforcement. A lack of preaching power, a deficiency in theological training, an

acquiescence in a 'once-born' and nominal membership, a tiedness to routine, an over-dependence on book-prayers, a lack of adaptability, a weakness in powers of organisation, a liability to represent 'the conservative party at prayer,' a community of interest with property and 'things as they are,' a monopoly of power by the clergy, a low standard in congregational fellowship, a deficiency as a body in unity of faith and fellowship—all these things are mainly true of the Church of England even though there are many instances to the contrary. They are weaknesses of which in many cases other Christians are aware, and if so the awareness is the call to them to render help.

But are other Churches also in need? I think so. I believe all the evangelical Churches need to get on to their knees in worship, not only physically but in their mind and soul. Their passion for freedom encourages in them a self-will which is intolerant of discipline and obedience. They are over-preached to. They are too dependent (even more than the Church of England) on the 'personal factor' and the popularity of individual preachers. They are lacking in credal allegiance. They value too little the sacramental gifts of God. They divorce religion from beauty.

A Church of England man is aware of these needs. They do not account for all the elements in his common attitude to Free Church men. The unenumerated elements are, alas! the sadly powerful ones of class-feeling and pride. But

Churchmen who would be ashamed to be governed by these are aware of these religious needs, at any rate in part, and believe that they could be made good by that which is the central characteristic of Catholicism—the Eucharist. I will defer reference till later to that which goes with the Eucharist, namely the priesthood representative of the whole Church and commissioned by an authority representative of the whole Church.

The question which I want to ask now is whether there is a sense of need among Presbyterians and Free Churchmen. Or are they secure in a complacent Protestantism? 'I have to acknowledge that I am unaware of any lack in my own Church which can be supplied by blessings from any other.' So said a prominent Wesleyan in my hearing not long ago. (That is as significant as the vicar's 'oil and water.') If the remark is representative of opinion in the non-Episcopalian Churches unity is indeed but a dim prospect. The most that could come of the attitude which it implies is a Federation of Protestant Churches. But is there any radical solution of the problem of unity in Federation? True, strong Federationist movements are at work in the Free Churches in England, while the main divisions of Presbyterianism are uniting in Scotland. But when these movements have been completed the main problem remains, or rather

the other half of the problem remains. It is the most difficult half, for while the first half involves only agreement among Protestants, the other half involves agreement between Catholics and Protestants.

For the latter, I cannot believe that Federation touches the heart of the matter. It seems to presuppose the substantial sufficiency of so many different—but indifferently different—Christian ways. It would not bring separated gifts and functions of the Spirit into mutually strengthening and correcting co-operation. It would make an alliance between separated bodies, but it would make no whole of divided parts. It would not reunite the divided People of God, but rather would stereotype its divisions. It would leave the unity of the one Body, the one People, unexpressed. It would imply that, while the dividedness of the Church is visible for all the world to see, its unity is essentially ideal and invisible. It would, I think, offer a cheap and painless solution of what is in reality a desperate problem. It would demand little self-searching and penitence from anyone concerned. It could be arrived at by prudent diplomacy. It would mean no passionate reunion of those who parted in passion. It would be a short cut which did not reach its goal.

I leave 'the longer way round which is the shorter way home' to the next chapter.

IX. Episcopacy as the Organ of Unity

THE alternative to Federation or to the *status quo* is organic unity. It is a great task which will only be achieved at a great cost. It means nothing less than the receiving from God of the restoration of the visible unity of the Body of Christ. The question is whether the different ministrations of the Spirit, which have sustained the Churches in separation, can be brought into mutual contribution within one Church—whether parts which have been active apart from or against one another can work together in a whole.

The goal can only be attained so far as men are swayed by an overmastering conviction that they cannot know or witness to Christ unless they share in the fullness of the fellowship of His Spirit. Unity can only be a unity of passion if it is in line with men's deepest need for Christ. If they are satisfied apart as to that which is central to their religion, I think they will remain apart. For they will be kept apart by the manifold tendencies, inclinations, habits, which make for division. But if, under the stress of days of change and opportunity, they feel that they are poor

in the knowledge of Christ and weak in devotion to Him, and if they see that other followers of the same Lord are strong where they are weak, then they will be drawn together by an attraction which will be irresistible. That is why in this whole matter nothing is so vital as the answering of the double question: Are we in need?—Are we in need of one another? The question will not be asked, let alone answered, by Christians who are complacent in separation. Complacency, or the being satisfied with that which is partial, or the taking the part for the whole, is the greatest hindrance to unity. It is, I had almost said, the sin against the Holy Ghost. But if there is a widespread sense of a poverty which could be enriched by others' wealth, then the movement towards unity has begun. Then the lineaments of the organic wholeness of the Body are again descried despite the mutilations. Then evidence is to hand that the Body *is* one though broken. Then the sense that separated parts are made to help each other points to a unity in Christ which is more than ideal but exists and demands expression. Then there is ground in experience for believing in the Body of Christ as made by God and not to be made or destroyed but only marred by man. If men could get so far, then they would be brought face to face with the second question, which, as we pointed

out in the last chapter, demands attention—namely, What can be the expression of the unity which is recognised as existent though broken ?

For, as I have said before, the thing about which those whom history has separated need most to agree is the Church of God as such. They need a main conception of the Church as the gift of God, before they come on to discuss the right means of its expression and continuity. And if we are to keep in line with the New Testament, the conception of the Church which has to be gripped is of the Church as *always there*—as there before Christ came ; as there to be the environment within which He worked ; as there to inherit the fulfilment of the promises made to the fathers ; as there to be reorganised and recommissioned as the trustee of the good news of God ; as there to be filled with the fullness of the Spirit. And to-day I believe there is this wonderful and awe-inspiring conclusion to be drawn from the situation in which we find ourselves—namely, that despite all that the ignorance and wilfulness of men have done to divide the Church and to dissipate the wealth of its life, nevertheless *the Church is here*, maimed but not destroyed. The organic unity of the Church in its wealth of diversity is here, divided but not annihilated. If we could come to that conclusion it would mean agreement in a great affirmation of faith :

'We believe in one universal Church, in the Body of Christ, in the Israel of God.' Those who were united in that affirmation would, I think, be favourably placed for travelling further and for facing together the thorny question, 'What can be the expression (or organ) of the unity of the Church in which we believe?'

Everyone will agree that it is a thorny subject when I say that the question to be faced is that of episcopacy. I come here to a question which controversy has, so to say, surrounded by acres of barbed wire. A man needs a vast apparatus of learning to be able to penetrate to the heart of the position. It would be folly for me to presume to possess the credentials for a proper handling of the subject. I can only suggest the way in which it can be hopefully approached. That is what I have tried to do. I believe there is hope that those who agree in believing in one Church of God will find in episcopacy that which is representative of its God-given unity. I cannot believe that men will agree that the Church is divine because it is episcopal. But I believe there is hope that they will agree that, as it is divine, its divine character as one and visible and universal is represented by an episcopally ordained ministry. And I believe that if they do so agree they will accept it for the sake of the unity of the Body.

But I do not believe that episcopacy will be

accepted as the bond of unity unless its acceptance is dissociated from denials of grace[1] outside episcopal boundaries, and is associated with the affirmation of the ministration of the One Spirit in the separated parts of the One Body. For Catholics to deny the validity for those Churches of the ministry and sacraments of non-episcopal Churches is, I think, to presume to judge of that which is beyond human judgment. Who shall say where God is not? Our Lord bids us recognise the fruits of the Spirit. Is there not overwhelming evidence of the fruits of His Spirit wherever in sincerity and faith men have called upon His Name? Does not any emphasis upon the necessity of episcopacy, which is carried by the dangerous power of logic into the denial of grace elsewhere, fly in the face of the wealth of spiritual endowment, the amazing record of spiritual achievement of the evangelical Churches? Does it not invite others to do that which they cannot do—namely, when they have tasted

[1] Cf. Lambeth Conference, 1908: Report of Committee appointed to consider and report upon the subject of Reunion and Intercommunion:—'Anglican Churchmen must contend for a valid ministry as they understand it and regard themselves as absolutely bound to stipulate for this for themselves and for any Communion of which they are members. But it is no part of their duty and therefore not their desire to go further and pronounce negatively upon the value in God's sight of the ministry of other Communions.'

and seen how gracious the Lord is, to deny the fact ?

Such denial too presupposes, I think, a niggling conception of God and of His ways. If Christ is the revelation of the one spiritual source and reality of things, if He is come and is at work in the full plenitude and wealth of spiritual power, if His Body is here as the organ of His working, is it not likely that His love cannot be shut up within exclusive channels, but is ever ready to be released and appropriated by the touch of faith ? If the Church be divine, if it be ' the fullness of Him that filleth all in all,' its life is as the tide of God's self-giving love wherewith He besieges the heart of His children. Who can canalise the ocean ? Wherever doors are opened is not Christ *there* to enter ? Where two or three are gathered together in His Name is He not there to bless ? Who can keep Him out ?

And yet the more passionately this is asserted and generously allowed, does it not become the more intelligible that, as men in their diversity lay hold upon the ever-available grace and presence of the Lord and hive off with them as with a treasure, they impair the witness to the world of one fellowship of the Spirit ? Does not the very prodigality of the divine grace, which is there for appropriation wherever men call on the Name of the Lord, proclaim the necessity for some means whereby

the partakers in the gift of God may be compacted into one? The fullness and freedom of grace does not lessen but increases the necessity of the visible Church and its ordered functions to the Gospel. For Christ came into the world to witness to the truth of God which was hid from the blind gaze of men. The Word became flesh and men saw. The love of God which is at work everywhere was concentrated and made manifest *there* in the Son. And this revelation of God Himself was not made at large but within the bosom of the People which He had chosen and distinguished as the organ of His will. And the witness to the Love revealed was committed to that People. They were confirmed anew in their vocation to be the visible witness to the world of the unseen reality of God Who had revealed Himself in Christ, that the world might know that the Father had sent the Son. The old Israel was recommissioned and given a new centre in the twelve Apostles whom the Christ chose out and to whom He entrusted the new covenant of the Father's love. And this new Israel was led by the Spirit to continue this apostolic ministry in a ministry expressive of its visible unity. And that ministry, accepted for the sake of the unity of the Body, has as a matter of historical fact been the bond of a unity within which a richly varied endowment of spiritual gift and function has been in

operation. And when that ministry was thrown over, under circumstances which made the unity of Christians in one visible fellowship seem unnecessary, the witness to the world has been the witness of visible division, while the unity of His people in Him has been bereft of expression. And now that the whole world is starving for one reconciling Name, and now that the securities which rendered division easy have crumbled—now that Christians are thrown into dependence upon one another for knowledge of the truth and life and love as they are in Jesus—shall they not find in that same ministry the means of binding into one the manifold operations of the One Spirit which they have verified in separation?

I wonder whether this that I have tried to express will kindle in the hearts of some of those who are at present separated from the Church of England a hope of reunion which does not involve them in the repudiation of the blessings that they have received from the Lord. I am sure that those who have repudiated episcopacy will not and cannot return to it as an exclusive channel of grace. Will they return to it and accept it as the organ of the unity of the One Church of Christ? Whether or no they do so will depend on their conception of the Church as one visible society. If Catholics cease from the presumption of

denying the grace of others' ministries and sacraments, they may fairly ask those others what they claim for them. It is a question which may I think be put with special pertinence to Presbyterians. The principle of the ministry as conceived by Catholicism is the securing of means that the sacraments are the sacraments of the whole Church. To that end those who administer the sacraments have patent accrediting as ministers of the whole Church by an authority which has been authorised to act for the whole Church. Do other Churches claim that their ministers and sacraments have this representative character? If so, do they conceive that the unity so represented is invisible? Are their sacraments the sacraments of the One Church? And is that One Church only the invisible society of all faithful people, which only takes shape and finds visible expression in groups? Will they reject this insistence on visibility as subtle and irrelevant? Or will they see its intimate consistency with the witness to the world of the love of God Incarnate?

I believe—as I have tried to show in earlier pages—that Evangelicals, in repudiating the visibility of the Church, repudiate that which secures men in a hold upon the particularity of God's working, not only in the heart but through external means. That is another way of saying that they have gone off with one half

of Christianity. They are powerful in their jealousy for the living Christ Who works unseen within the heart. They have made Churches and ministries to represent those who have the witness within themselves to the reality of Christ. If they do return — bringing their sheaves with them—to episcopacy as the organ of unity, it would be disingenuous to disguise the fact that they will return to that which is bound up with the operation of Christ, not only unseen in the heart, but in sacramental acts. As a matter of historical fact, sacramentalism has mainly gone with episcopacy. One may refuse to deny the blessing of God upon other ministries and in other sacraments, and yet observe that ministries other than Catholic have in fact weakened in sacramental faith and practice. The Spirit which has so manifestly dowered the evangelical Churches has not, it seems, prompted them to emphasise the self-giving of Christ to faith by sacramental means. I think it is only an observation of fact to say that, however strong their sacramental doctrine on paper, the evangelical Churches have allowed the 'breaking of the bread' to occupy less than a central place in their devotion. On the other hand, Churches with episcopal ministries have been strong—have been prompted by the Spirit to be strong —in laying stress upon sacramental operation and gift. In other words, as before, Catho-

licism is essentially sacramental, Evangelicalism essentially prophetic.

I am sure that Evangelicalism will find in episcopacy more than an organ of unity, and that they will not welcome that more unless they are in need of the half of Christianity from which they have moved away. They will be repelled by what is inherent in episcopacy unless they want reinforcing by the objectivity of sacramental gift. For episcopacy as the organ, representative of the whole Body and in the Name of its invisible Head, gives the commission to men to celebrate the Eucharist which is the Eucharist of the whole Body, and to preach the Word which is the message of the whole Body. I am sure that it is misleading to offer episcopacy to separated evangelicals merely as a form of Church polity. It is itself sacramental—it is an outward and visible (though not exclusive) means for the bestowal of inward and spiritual grace. As it acts for the whole Church in its representative function of ordination, it not only recognises the inward calling of the ordained by the Spirit, but acts as the organ of Christ Who sends men as His ministers and gives them His Spirit for their ministry.

This is a great challenge to faith. It was intensely challenging to my faith when I came to be ordained. I found only one thing to do, namely to throw myself on Christ, in trust that

on the occasion of the laying on of the hands by the authorised representative of His Church, He Himself was in operation. Others have felt the challenge and have been affronted by it. I have never forgotten the story of how a Congregationalist, present at the Anglican ordination of his college friend, flung himself away from the ceremony at the words of the ordinal—'Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of priest in the Church of God' —saying, 'That's blasphemy!'

It would be misleading and insincere to invite others to find in episcopacy (or Catholic order) the means and expression of unity without making quite plain its challenging character as the sacramental organ of the Church's unity. It is no more challenging than the Eucharist or Baptism. All alike make a searching demand on faith—faith that acts done in His Name, by the commissioned representatives of His Body, are the acts of Christ Himself.

This sacramentalism is the differentia of Catholicism. It is capable of the greatest abuse. It can be made magical in the proper sense of the word—that is, it can be divorced from whole-hearted dependence upon God and from moral co-operation with His grace. It can be obscured and marred by the sin and infirmity of men. But it can be adorned by all the faith and passion for righteousness that man can bring to his intercourse with God.

It is there for those who are most suspicious of its abuse to put it to right use. It is the priestly side of Christianity which needs the co-operation and criticism of the prophetic. It needs interpreting by the preacher's word. It needs to be related to life. It needs to have as its end not the religious gratification of individuals, but the service which they can render to the glory of God and for His kingdom on earth. It needs to be environed by the uttermost longing that it may bear moral fruit in consecrated and adventurous lives.

I believe Evangelicalism needs it, for it abounds in that which was the evangelical's glory, namely the insistence (even to extreme exaggeration) on the free and all-sufficing salvation given by God to men. It is marked by the note most distinctive of the good news about God—that essential evangel of the love of God which surpasses all the lovelessness of His children. It is rooted in the fact that, though we love God very little, He loves us very much. It invites men to come in the simplicity of faith to open themselves to the stream of the lavish self-giving of God.

Can this vision of a recovered unity be realised? Can the passion with which the two main traditions in Christendom have antagonised each other be employed in mutual and contributory service? It can only be by the gift of God, sought for in the most candid

mutual confession and testimony and in a fellowship of prayer. It can only be by His guidance and gift that the acceptance of Catholic order by evangelicals shall be accompanied by full loyalty to the ministrations of the Spirit which they have known in separation. In other words, it can only be by His guidance that the unity expressed by a representative organ of unity is not a uniformity but a unity in diversity. If there is to be one Order it must allow of orders within itself. If one way, there must be ways within the one way. Only by the recreative gift of God can the Body once again be organic, a whole of correlated parts, a unity made up of contributory elements. Only by the renewal of His gift can the 'whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, make increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.'

X. Interchange of Pulpits and Intercommunion

AS this discussion draws to a close I think I can hear some voices saying with insistence: Yes, there are many things to be considered, there is need of conference and discussion, but nevertheless cannot something be *done*? It takes all sorts to make a Church, and I willingly recognise how right it is that those who like myself enjoy discussion should be counterbalanced by those who are made to insist on speedy and decisive action. All who are named by the Name of Christ need, with an exceedingly great need, to be shown what God would have them do. In this day of God's kingdom they need not only to think and discuss but to follow Jesus 'in the way.' So I do pray that those who insist on the necessity for hard and deep thinking on this great question of unity may be saved from making thought an excuse for inaction, and may be led to the point whence to launch out in bold action. But as to the need of hard and deep thinking about unity there can, I think, be no doubt. Nothing really fruitful can be done in this tremendous matter on merely popular and easy lines. The wounds of cen-

turies have to be healed. The things about which men have died at each other's hands have to be reconciled. Deep-seated passions which have been the impulsive force in mutual resistance and antagonism have at some great cost to be changed into forces of mutual assistance and co-operation.

If this is so I cannot think that it is proud or stubborn to refuse to defer to the opinions which are generally current about unity. There is little rock and much sand in the thought of the man in the street on the subject. It is an inadequate foundation on which to build a new order of things. Our Lord did not attempt to build on it. He did build on the capacities for faith and devotion which are in the heart of common men, but that does not mean that he built on their superficial opinions and current prejudices. He digged far deeper.

So to-day. Unity cannot be settled by high-brows and scholars. It must come through the co-operation of ordinary men. But all the more must the thought of ordinary men on the subject be transformed by deep-going education into firm and tested conviction.

For, as has been pointed out all through, unity has to do with the very core of the Gospel. It is essential to our hold upon the truth of God and to the witness in life and service which accords with that truth. It has to do with the centre, not with the circumference. With

the main proposition, not with its corollaries. With the knowledge of Christ, not with the conveniences of religious organisation.

I trust that I shall never forget what I have learnt from laymen during the war as to what they think about the Christian religion. Many of them are full of a wistful and hardly-expressed yearning for the blazing forth, from the mysterious centre which is called Christ, of a fire of love and power. We 'padres' have been shown (what we ought to have known better before) what a glorious thing our fellow man is, with what a potentiality for doing and dying he is endowed. But when all that has been fully acknowledged it remains true that the average man's opinion about the central thing of our religion is, for constructive purposes, as sand instead of stone. The upshot, to my mind, of the experiences of the war is to reveal afresh what a wonderful soil of honest and true hearts is waiting for the good seed—the word of the Kingdom. But the seed is not rooted in the soil. Men are not in possession of the Gospel. When they talk about unity (as they do) as an easy matter capable of obvious solution, they very often do not know what the Gospel is in which the Church is to be united. About this, as about many vital moral questions, or about the distinction between Christianity and other religions, or about the essentially missionary character of the Gospel,

they are in a haze. I think there is not a single vital issue about which they are not prepared 'to empty out the baby with the bath.' That is true even though they are, as they are, better men than the man who says it.

There is the same need of thorough-going thought about this great subject when one turns from the general public and from men in the street to the ranks of the 'faithful.' Among them there is, in more or less degree, conviction to be found. They have got some grip on the Gospel. In some cases there is clear and inwrought conviction and a firm grip. Thank God there is, or the Church would be at a vanishing point. But this conviction is commonly not favourable to unity. I think it is fair to say that in so far as there is strong membership and a fire of conviction, whether in the ranks of 'Church' or 'Chapel,' it is still in favour of antagonism and division. The hold upon all parties of the old ideas and traditions, the grip of things as they are and have been, are immense. I would not exaggerate, but I think that is mainly true. May I be forgiven the presumption of adding that, if there is truth in the main view of the problem of unity as I have tried to sketch it in this little book, I do not believe the great bulk of 'the faithful' have begun to think about it.

So in face of opinion both hazy or clear, both at the heart of the Churches or round

their fringes, I would humbly stick to it and reply to the question, 'What can be *done*?' by saying, 'Educate, think, confer, pray.' It is certainly true that action cannot wait until everyone has thought out everything and come to unanimous agreement. But it must wait, as I think, until all have been offered the chance of getting to close and decisive grips with the real issues. I do not think that the Churches' leaders can do more than they have done. They are, as it is, a long way ahead of the rank and file of the clergy and laity in all the Churches. This is not a case for sitting back and clamouring, 'Why do not the Bishops do something?' The call rather is to get to work in localities, in interdenominational meetings where there is friendliness and social intercourse and outspoken discussion and mutual testimony—and prayer. This has begun, but it has only just begun. It must be developed widely and deeply. Everywhere the question must be faced: Do the separated Churches need one another for the knowledge of their God and for the fighting of His battles?

But I must go on to acknowledge that the demand that 'something should be done' is frequently not left in general terms, but takes particular shape in the plea for an interchange of pulpits and for intercommunion between the Churches. As I have taken upon me to write about unity, I ought to try to say what

I think about these proposals. I do not think there is any shame in the possession of a torn mind about such things. That in which we all are—to wit, the Body of Christ—is torn, and that being so it is likely that our minds should be distracted and tugged several ways. We are confronted by issues which cannot be dealt with by the rigour of consistent logic. They are, as it were, too thick for the thinness of theory. If, therefore, I am asked for a very 'pat' answer I cannot give it.

I think that anyone who has got hold of the position outlined in this book will anticipate my being of opinion that little will be effected by such measures, unless they are preceded by thorough-going discussion and mutual understanding. I distrust them both as popular moves and concessions to fashionable opinion. But I do advocate the interchange of pulpits (I should call it interchange of instruction), under conditions outlined below, as a means of mutual education and on the basis, arrived at by conference, that the Churches have precious things to give one another. It would be highly educative for an Anglican congregation, which is often so unfriendly and lacking in fellowship, to be presented say by a Wesleyan or Congregationalist preacher with the ideals of congregational fellowship, which have been in some degree attained by Wesleyans and Congregationalists. It would be of great benefit

to Anglicans—especially, may I say, of the straiter sect—to hear the positive testimony of a Friend to the reality of the Spirit of the living God. It would help the Church of England in its habituation to noisy and chattering services to be told—again by a Friend—of the secret of silence and of quiet in the presence of God. Conversely it would, I think, help a 'Chapel' congregation, overdone maybe with popular preachers and 'anniversaries,' to have put to them positively and lovingly what Eucharistic worship is and what it means. I think there should be special occasions for such mutual instruction and that the Churches should accredit special individuals for the task.

If a preacher belonging to one communion spoke to the congregation of another assembled for its normal and characteristic worship, little but confusion would ensue. Such an arrangement would imply no other principle than that all the Churches are much the same. It would be based on no clear understanding of mutual need. The preacher too would be embarrassed, either by appearing to agree with the practices of those whom he visited when in fact he differed, or by a constraint (born of the desire not to speak controversially) being imposed on him to prevent his giving downright expression to his convictions and traditions. On the other hand, the arrangement of special occasions would give freedom for a full

and unreserved interchange between different traditions. It would allow for the positive and unembarrassed communication to one another of those things which are dear to the hearts of the divided Churches. On any other basis an interchange of pulpits might easily mean but the paying of mutual compliments and the saying of smooth things. If so it would be a saltless and insignificant business as regards real progress towards unity.

About intercommunion I could wish that my 'trumpet' had a more 'certain sound.' This little book is but an open letter to others who are wrestling that they may learn what is the will of God in this crucial matter. I can but share with them my hesitating thoughts.

I fancy that there are only two groups of people who enjoy both freedom from hesitation and consistency of thought on this subject. There are, firstly, those who hold fast by the conviction that there are no Christians outside Catholic order. For them, therefore, there is nobody with whom to join in intercommunion. But their basal conviction is more simple than true—that is, it does not cover or correspond with the facts. It implies a refusal to recognise the fruits of the Spirit manifested beyond the borders of Catholic order. There are, secondly, those who are content to recognise in the different Churches partial manifestations of the one invisible Church. They seek for intercommunion

as a federating bond between so many Christian groups. But I have already tried to show (Chapter VIII) how Federation, as a solution of the problem of disunion, falls short of the true goal, which is nothing less than the reunion of the one and visible Church of Christ.

What remains then to those, such as myself, who cannot second the confident Nay and Yea with which these two groups greet proposals for intercommunion ?

At any rate we can ask others to recognise and respect our difficulties, so that they may help us to find the right way through them.[1]

I confess to the keen sense that the pain and scandal of the broken Body is most felt in regard to the sacrament of the one loaf. There follows too, from what I have tried to set out in earlier pages, a strong impulse upon me to help to express to members of other Churches the fact that the Church of England does recognise them as fellow-Christians, and does not deny the blessings of God upon the ministrations of their Churches. I long to express the unity of all in the same Lord by unity at His Table. But, as I have tried to show, the unity of all in the same Lord is a unity in a diversity of ministrations. I cannot

[1] It will clear the ground to state that by intercommunion is meant reciprocal communion—Churchmen going to Free Church celebrations and vice versa.

doubt, both on grounds of history and of present experience, that the Church of England in its sacramentalism holds in trust for others a very significant ministration of the Spirit. That significance has in part to do with the Eucharist being the Eucharist, not merely of the local congregation, but of the one and universal Church of Christ. It is in virtue of this Catholic significance that I, with many others, feel drawn to say that the Church of England should welcome baptised members of other Churches to the Eucharist. That would be in keeping with the stress laid upon the rite as 'for all.' On the other hand, the proposal for reciprocal welcome seems to imply that there is no differentiation between the Churches as regards the sacrament. And that belief I cannot but think is unwarranted. Hence the fear that the Church of England would betray its trust, and therefore betray others for whom it holds the trust, if it encouraged the idea that there is no real difference between the Churches in their sacramental belief and practice, or in the credentials which they require of those who celebrate the Eucharist. I question whether any general and indiscriminate measure of reciprocal communion would advance the cause of unity. Could it avoid being so much free and easy following of a line of least resistance? Would it be significant of any real reconciliation between deep differences and antagonisms?

From the point of view of the Church of England would it not compromise the Eucharist, as representative of the whole Church, by making it the rite of a part among other parts ?

And yet it is hard to rest satisfied with a merely non-possumus conclusion upon this issue. One seems pressed by deep impulses to overleap the barriers of argument. A way forward must be found, which authority could sanction, whereby those who seek, not to perpetuate existing divisions but to be brought together as Christians in a unity comprehensive of all the gifts of the Spirit, may come together in the Eucharist. The strongest demand for intercommunion comes from men and women who have met together in conference, and have had things out with one another with candour and even with harshness, and have had their feet set in the way towards the costly and difficult—but all the more blessed—bringing together of the different ministrations of the one Spirit. Where spiritual fellowship (salted by an unreserved speaking of the truth to one another in love) has been attained, the impulse towards the expression and sealing of that fellowship by the sacrament of unity acquires an almost irresistible urgency. Similarly, where different Christians are drawn to one another and to their common Master by united service on behalf of His cause, they feel impelled to the desire that their unity of heart and will, to which

they have been brought by their shared discipleship, may be consecrated by Christ in the sacrament of His love. In either case it may well prove inevitable that a rising tide of spiritual life will overflow the banks within which men would confine it.

Has not the time come for experiment on the part of those who have become united in the quest for the healing of the one Body of Christ? I am sure that any action must be preceded by such conference and mutual understanding as earn the right to issue in action. But there comes a time when discussion can go no further and experience must decide. Progress comes not only from discussion, but from discussion followed by experiment. It is undeniable that progress towards unity has resulted from action being taken whereby different Christians have met together in prayer and conference. An increase in mutual respect and understanding, and a realisation of the wealth of spiritual endowment which division has dissipated, have come about experimentally. There has been actual contribution to one another by Christians of different tradition and not only talk about contribution. So in regard to sacramental gifts, men are coming through discussion and testimony to the point of understanding that they have treasures to share with one another (for the testimony is not from one side alone). But is it not true that they will be carried beyond that

point to the realisation of what those treasures are only by sharing them with one another ?

Such experimental steps are hard for Catholics of any kind to take, for they have most to imperil thereby. But I think the call to them is to trust in the reality of their inheritance. They have to trust in the capacity of Catholic order to justify itself. They have to expect the verification by others of the actuality of gift and presence to which they themselves testify. The more sure they are of the strength of their position, the more ready they should be to have it tested. Similarly they should be ready to let Christ verify to them whatever it is that He has to give through the ministrations of other Churches. That is the point, namely the reality of Christ and of His gifts, the actuality of that about which we argue. Are we hesitating to trust ourselves to Him ?

Cannot we find a way past our several fears by confessing them to one another and by bringing them to Him ? For fears do abound : fears, lest the Church of England be split on this issue : fears, lest what is tried under restrictions becomes indiscriminate and anarchic : fears, lest what is attempted be exploited in sectarian interests : fears, lest steps on slippery slopes lead to an abyss of confusion. But 'love casteth out fear'—His love, not ours. We are afraid (and rightly) of ourselves and of one another. But need we be afraid of the Lord if, with the request to

be given His sincerity and singleness of desire, we throw ourselves one and all on Him? Does intercommunion seem to be a leap in the dark? Might it not be rather a casting of issues which transcend human wisdom and love upon Him Who is the wisdom and the power of God?

I would end, therefore, on a note of hope. I stretch out in eager expectancy towards those things which God has prepared for the broken Body of Christ if, with an urgency of desire and a passion to learn, its members will bend together in submission to His will. Yet these are baffling and even terrible days. Christian men of any vital conviction must feel that the community at large is almost terrifyingly blind to the judgments of God which are in all the world. The fires of a world-war seem hardly at all to have consumed the elements in civilisation which cried out for purgation. The violence of war seems to have reinforced the idolatry of force. The hearts of many men seem to have been rendered proof against the fruitful lessons of God's condemnation on the whole peace-life of the world by the sterile and futile passion of hatred. The tremendous words of prophecy seem to reacquire an awful significance. The fire of judgment is kindled round about man, 'yet he knew it not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.[1]

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[1] Isa. xlii. 25.

All the more therefore does hope rise invincible that it shall be given to the Church of Christ to be saved from blindness and hardness of heart and to know the things which belong unto peace. 'Man's need is God's opportunity.' The Church of Christ lies broken, yet in every part it bears testimony to the grace and mercy of God. He has not forgotten to be gracious to all who in every place have called upon His Name. The vision rises and expands that those who in separation have tasted of His goodness shall rise to receive from Him healing and reconciliation. Thus shall the Body of Christ live again in recovered wholeness of truth and life and love. Thus shall men come to know afresh that the Father gives to our Lord to be 'head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.' Thus shall life-giving streams of hope and faith flow into the desert of a desolated world. Thus shall the restless heart of the world find peace in God.

THE END

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